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# THE ROMANIC REVIEW

## A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION

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## HERVIS DE MES AND THE GESTE DES LORRAINS

A STUDY of the composition of *Hervis de Mes* led me to the conclusion that the romance develops a thesis: a man's nobility may be of the finest, even if he derives it from his mother's side only, and even if his father is a rich villain.<sup>1</sup> Conceived as the development of the thesis that a life lived *marchandement* may still be noble, *Hervis de Mes* shows the remarkable unity of composition which I have tried to demonstrate. The question to consider here is whether or not and to what extent this thesis is already pre-figured in the other branches of the *Geste des Lorrains*. It seems that, in the feudal world of the *Geste*, the issue of money and of financial difficulties is, indeed, not infrequently raised, and, that, not less frequently, the derivation of prestige, moral and material, from marriages or from matrilineal descent is also an important issue. Whereas, in the *Geste* as a whole, and specifically, in *Anseïs*, attempts to cope with these issues result in tragic confusion, the thesis of *Hervis* can be understood as a more satisfactory solution à la champenoise for the same issues.

A passage from *La Mort de Garin le Loherenc* may be chosen as a point of departure. Garin's warring reduces him to such poverty that he proposes to sell his fief of Metz to Pepin. "Engagier voil Mez et tot le paiz."<sup>2</sup> Pepin declines, his wife favors Garin. The situation is comparable to the beginning of *Hervis de Mes*. Duke Pierre sees no way out of his difficulties, "S'il ne vent Mes la mirable cité/Et Loërraine . . ." (verses 20-21, 55-56). His position with regard to his rich provost Thierry, a parvenu, is like that of Garin with regard to the venal and not quite legitimate Pepin.<sup>3</sup> Thierry in *Hervis* is willing to help Duke Pierre, but later on, like Pepin in *La Mort Garin*, he is unwilling to help his own son Hervis and leaves him in dire poverty (2133-2139). Pepin is approached by Garin and refuses to help. Thierry is approached by Duke Pierre (Garin's grandfather) and refuses to help Hervis (Garin's father). The queen, wife of Pepin against her earlier inclinations for Garin, favors Garin's request. Aélis, daughter of Duke Pierre, and wife of Thierry against her will, favors her son Hervis (Garin's father).

Pepin has much more in common with Thierry than might be inferred from this episode. He is notoriously money-conscious. His venality is often referred to in money terms.<sup>4</sup> Not unlike the upstart Thierry, Pepin is some-

1. *Hervis de Mes*, ed. E. Stengel, *Gesellschaft für Romanische Literatur*, I (1903). A. Adler, "Hervis de Mes and the Matrilineal Nobility of Champagne," *RR*, XXXVII (1946), 150-161.

2. *La Mort de Garin le Loherenc*, ed. E. du Ménil, Paris, 1846, p. 197, vs. 4257.

3. See note 5.

4. *Mort Garin*, pp. 100-102. Cf. *Anseïs de Mes*, ed. H. J. Green, Paris, 1939, p. 19, and R. K. Bowman, *The Connections of the Geste des Lorrains with other French Epics and Medieval Genres*, New York, 1940, p. 121 n. 22.

how a parvenu, his legitimate right to be king is not universally recognized.<sup>5</sup> Pepin shows and is advised to show a sense of thrift. When Hervis is attacked by the *Hongres* and seeks aid, Hardré reminds Pepin: "Hervis est riches . . . Tes regnés est soufreteus et chetis."<sup>6</sup> Explaining why Pepin is not able to grant assistance to Thierry de Moriane, the same Hardré advises Pepin: "Tes regne est *povre* et d'*argent escheris*."<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, Thierry (Hervis' father) is comparable to Pepin: both are husbands not wanted by their wives. Not only did the queen marry Pepin against her inclinations, and favor persistently Garin (a Loherenc, as Aélis favors her son, the Loherenc Hervis), but, like Aélis with regard to Thierry, the queen is of purer nobility than her husband. She is the daughter of a real king, Thierry de Moriane,<sup>8</sup> whereas Pepin's royalty is questioned.

Invited to exploit such analogies between Pepin and Thierry, we must, in an effort to outline the two characters, dissociate them clearly from other epical connections. Taken in isolation, one by one, each of the traits mentioned thus far is not to be confined to either one, neither to Pepin only nor to Thierry. Pepin refusing aid to a vassal has his counterpart in various branches of the tradition of Guillaume d'Orange. In *Aliscans*, Guillaume asks Louis for aid, and Louis replies in the manner of Pepin.<sup>9</sup> The example of a queen, former fiancée of a vassal, and appropriated by the king for himself, is found in *Girart de Roussillon*.<sup>10</sup> Like Garin, Girart is given a queen's assistance in advice and money. As for venality, Charlemagne suffers that debasement.<sup>11</sup> In the case of Guillaume and Louis, however, there is a vassal treated with ingratitude by his liege, but there is no queen with biased loyalties, no question of aid in monetary terms, and Louis, however pitiable, is king by right. In *Girart de Roussillon*, Charles Martel is not a usurper, and, according to *Garin*, Charles Martel's poverty is the result of his wars against Girart. In *Auberi le Bourguignon*, *Roman de Landri*, *Daurel et Beton*, *Beuve d'Hanstone*, *Gui de Nanteuil*, Pepin's venality is not associated with the question of legitimacy and with the problematic attitude of a wife "nobler" than her husband.<sup>12</sup>

Each of the traits in question has its epical analogues. Knit together so as to form a configuration, these traits seem to converge toward Pepin in *Garin*, *Mort Garin*, *Girbert*, and *Ansejys*, and toward Thierry in *Hervis*.

5. *Garin le Loherenc*, ed. P. Paris, Paris, 1833-1835, I, 213 f. Cf. Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-119.

6. *Garin*, I, 53.

7. *Garin*, I, 77 (italics added). Cf. *ibid.*, p. 81, Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 18., and *Hervis de Mes*, pp. 459 ff.

8. *Garin*, I, 115-117, 122, 293, 297-300; II, 14.

9. For this specific instance in *Aliscans*, and for the connections of Guillaume d'Orange with the *Geste des Loherencs*, cf. Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-55.

10. Also in *Girart de Vienne*, a counterfeit of *Girart de Roussillon*. Cf. Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 24 n. 30, and F. Lot, "L'Elément historique de *Garin le Lorrain*," *Etudes d'histoire du moyen âge dédiées à Gabriel Monod*, Paris, 1896, p. 218.

11. Cf. G. Paris, *Histoire littéraire*, XXII, pp. 430 ff.

12. Instances referred to by Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

Loosely aggregated in the case of Pepin, more closely and rationalized in a different manner in the case of Thierry, these traits form the outlines of a money-conscious upstart, husband of a noble (or "nobler") wife who, on her part, favors a Loherenc (her former fiancé, her son). Assuming that the author of *Hervis* knew Pepin from the older branches of the *Geste*,<sup>13</sup> and proceeding from the thesis of *Hervis*, we may ask if Pepin has not been used by the author of *Hervis* for the ends of his thesis.

Contemptible as Pepin's venality seems, the king carries prestige in spite of his weaknesses. Often badly obeyed, he is quite as often appealed to as the supreme arbiter in the strife between Loherencs and Bordelais. The author of *Hervis* is primarily interested in glorifying the origins of an aristocratic family, the *Loherencs*.<sup>14</sup> He is biased, however, by his conception of *la champenoise*, that nobility derived from the mother can be made acceptable by the father's money. In view of the difficulty involved in enhancing the type of nobility he has in mind, it is quite understandable that, in order not to seem bizarre or revolutionary in his outlook, he should have looked for the elements he needed wherever he could find them, preferably in the *Geste des Loherencs* itself. There he found, endowed with the prestige of royal dignity, a man who thinks and speaks in terms of money, an upstart married to a royal princess. This combination of elements, which otherwise might well have seemed ugly and least worthy to be remembered, contained the nucleus around which the author of *Hervis* could develop his thesis as it was found in tradition. This is all the more likely because the ugly elements are not confined to Pepin alone. They appear in a different light if he is seen from the point of view of the Bordelais and in connection with them, and lose much of their ugliness because of their usefulness to the author of *Hervis*.

Whatever may be said against the Bordelais, they are strong and influential, more so than the Loherencs, and decisively so as the *Geste* progresses toward the end of *Ansejfs*.

The main cause of the feud between Bordelais and Loherencs is the question of fiefs granted by Pepin. "Fromont's objection when Garin married Blanchefleur was not due to the fact that Fromont wanted her for herself, but for the land that went with her."<sup>15</sup> On this strictly materialistic basis, the Loherencs struggle heroically and are reduced to bankruptcy.<sup>16</sup> The Bordelais have enough money to bribe the king. The superiority of the Bordelais consists in financial resources and, as is made clear toward the end of *Girbert*, in the support that comes from women. The Loherenc

13. Cf. A. Rhode, "Die Beziehungen zwischen den *Chansons de geste* 'Hervis de Mes' und 'Garin le Loherain,'" *Ausgaben und Abhandlungen*, III (1881), 121-170.

14. He reminds us continually that Hervis is the father of Garin and Bègue, relying on the popularity of these two great feudal heroes.

15. Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

16. *Mort Garin*, pp. 197 ff.

Hernaut is given Ludie, daughter of Fromont, to wife.<sup>17</sup> In *Anseïs* (93-94) we read: "C'est en Artois, *car de par Ludiis*,/Est conte Hernaus de la terre sesis."<sup>18</sup> Ludie is the evil genius on whose initiative Girbert is killed. Loëys, son of Hernaut and Ludie, is fully aware of the fact that the Loherenes, his father's family, are less powerful than *his mother's* side, the Bordelais. Provoking Anseïs, Girbert's son, Loëys says (202-224):<sup>19</sup>

*Tout ton lignage a un mot te di ci:  
Ne sont que quatre que on le set de fin,  
Mais mon lignage [his mother's family!]  
fu ades de grant pris:*

.....  
*Mais tu qui es povres dolanz chetis  
S'or estoit mors Giberz li fils Garin,  
Ton pere sol que tu par aimes si,  
Tu'n avroies ne parent ne ami  
Qui plus t'aidast ta guerre a maintenir.  
Outre la mer te covendroit fourir  
En autrui terre comme povres chetis.*

The resources Ludie is able to throw into the war are enormous.<sup>20</sup> Her relatives, Bauche *li cors* and Berengiers *li gris* are the powerful opponents of Anseïs and Pepin in the disaster of Santerre. Bauche and Berengiers become more powerful by marrying the two daughters of Servais d'Irlande, another cousin of Ludie.<sup>21</sup> Women, Amazons led by Ludie, are the decisive factor in securing for the Bordelais the crucial victory at Santerre.<sup>22</sup> "Les dames ont vaincu l'estor plenier" (8884). Significantly, and not only in order to enable Pepin to marry the traditionally better known Berthe,<sup>23</sup> Pepin's first wife Blanche fleur dies, killed by a falling beam in the midst of the portents on the eve of the battle. Thus, while Ludie on the side of the Bordelais swings into full action, Blanche fleur, the propitiating genius of the Loherenes, fades out of existence. The woman's share of motivation and initiative appears so well recognized that, at the rumor of Blanche fleur's death, Bauche feels that the fighting is henceforth without objective (8404-8413):<sup>24</sup>

*Ceste bataille feist bon a leissier,  
.....  
La force avons d'aus toz a domagier.  
Mais por le roi le devons nos laissier*

17. *Girbert de Mes*, quoted from *Anseïs* (ed. Green), p. 20.

18. Italics added. For Ludie's influence see also *Anseïs*, vss. 3171 ff., 3606 ff., 4627.

19. Italics and brackets added.

20. See *Anseïs*, vss. 4548 ff. and *passim*.

21. *Anseïs*, vss. 5411 ff. Bauche and Berengiers, Ludie's relatives, are definitely the most important opponents of Anseïs. See *Anseïs*, vss. 9286 ff. and 9301 ff.

22. For the episode of the Amazons, see A. Adler, *MLN*, LXI (1946), 451 ff.

23. Cf. Bowman, *op. cit.*, pp. 6 ff.

24. Italics added. In *Anseïs*, vss. 3840 ff., Gautier d'Artois complains: "Fous est li rois que por eus nos gourie / Por les parens ma dame la roïne."

*Qui est no sire . . .  
 Ne mais sa fame l'en a fet desvoier  
 Por ces parenz qu'elle voloit aidier.  
 Mais or est morte . . .*

In *Garin*, *Mort Garin*, and *Girbert*, the superiority of the Bordelais consists in money and their ability to bribe even the king. In *Girbert* and *Anseÿs*, their superiority is due to the initiative of a woman and her relatives. Ugly in many of its aspects, the stand taken by Ludie and the Bordelais is not altogether unjustified. Wrong as they were at the beginning of the *Geste*, the Bordelais are no longer wrong. Bauche himself, in the contemplative mood of his *moniage*, specifies to Anseÿs (*Anseÿs*, 9245-9255):

*Tout au premier quant Begues tu tuez  
 C'a la forest si comme oï avez  
 Fu li drois leur . . .  
 Et li lors nostres, puis fu li lanz muez  
 Et si refu par devers nous tornez,  
 Molt fu Girbert que fous desmesurez  
 Quant de la teste Fromont . . .  
 Fist un hennap fere . . .  
 . . . . .  
 Et no lignage dont adonc iert amez  
 Par al afere fu li drois remuez.*

In fairness to the facts, Fromont the Bordelais cannot even be held responsible for the tragic fatality of Begon's death.<sup>25</sup> Fromont is willing to appease Garin, but advised by his friends, he refuses to hand over the men who had killed Begon as a poacher.

If ends justify the means, the cause of the Bordelais may seem to affect the evaluation of their methods. If their cause seemed defensible in the end, the means they used, financial resources and the somewhat unorthodox emphasis on women, must also have seemed defensible. Filled with admiration for Garin and Begon and knowing their tragic experiences from the *Geste*, the author of *Hervis* may well have intended to endow his Loherenc with the factors seen to constitute the power of his race's formidable opponents the Bordelais. Well prepared to recognize the significance of money and power derived from women, the author of *Hervis*, familiar with the socio-economic conditions in Champagne, did not hesitate to transfer these factors from the Bordelais to his beloved Loherencs, all the less so because the Bordelais had been seen to use them as means to achieve defensible ends.

25. *Garin*, II, 217-245. In MS N (prepared for publication by E. Monges), the episode starts at l. 10127, f. 77c, and ends l. 10946, f. 80a.—I have not seen this longer version of Begon's death, and Bauche has a strong case all the way through. He turns out to be a saint (*Anseÿs*, vss. 10312 ff.). Already before the battle of Santerre he had shown his kindly concern for the poor people who might suffer in the war (*ibid.*, vss. 4341 ff.).

The author of *Hervis* could then proceed to give to Hervis what Garin and his descendants should have known how to use in the first place.<sup>26</sup> Though money-conscious, the Bordelais were aristocrats. In order to prove à la champenoise that prestige can be derived from a woman's nobility only, even if the father is a *vilain*, the author of *Hervis* was able to point to the temporary associate of the Bordelais, Pepin. There, under the halo of royal dignity, was a money-conscious "upstart," husband of a noble wife, associated, for the sake of money, with money-conscious men, relatives of powerful women. There is some evidence that the author of *Hervis* or a redactor actually compared the nobility of Hervis with that of Pepin and decided in favor of the former. When Pepin's father, Charles Martel, is advised to ask Hervis for military assistance, he asks: "Cis chevaliers est il point gentis hom?"<sup>27</sup> Hardré satisfies Charles Martel by giving an account of Hervis' pedigree from the side of Pierre, the maternal grandfather. Hervis, whose eligibility is thus endorsed, returns the compliment by questioning the messengers: "Karles Martiaus dont vous [ci] m'avés parlé/Est [il] drois oirs de France le regné . . .?"<sup>28</sup> This comparison is aimed at Pepin through his father Charles Martel. In *Garin* (II, 9), in a passage inserted late enough to make it possible to assume that the reviser knew *Hervis* in some form,<sup>29</sup> the marriage of Garin and Blanche fleur is declared unlawful because "Hervis de Mez, qui fu pères Garin,/Après-germains fut-il au roi Thieri [Thierry de Moriane, father of Blanche fleur]."<sup>30</sup> According to G. Paris, *après-germain* signifies *cousin issu de german*: "c'était sans doute du côté de sa mère, fille du duc de Metz . . ."<sup>31</sup> Garin quietly accepts this verdict! Dr. Bowman asks: "We wonder why such awkward means were adopted to separate Garin and Blanche fleur?"<sup>32</sup> The answer might be that the discovery of Hervis' family relationship with king Thierry of Moriane furnishes some more evidence of distinction for the Loherecs, even if they are related through Hervis' mother. By claiming the distinguished woman for himself, Pepin makes it clear for all concerned that her nobility is less close to him than to Garin, Hervis' son.

Both romances, *Hervis de Mes* and *Anseïs de Mes*, are concerned with questions of money as a resource for the aristocratic style of life, and of prestige derived from noble women. We cannot decide how much of *Anseïs* was known to the author of *Hervis* or in what form. Both, however, seem

26. It is true that Garin and Begon had as wives the daughters of Mille, king of Blaives. But in the case of Garin, this marriage was only a second choice, after Blanche fleur had been claimed by Pepin. The emphasis on women as sources of power and prestige starts with Ludie. The Loherecs were poor (see above), whereas the Bordelais thought and acted throughout in terms of money.

27. *Hervis*, ed. Stengel, *Anlage IX*, p. 464, vs. 881.

28. *Hervis*, *Anlage IX*, p. 473, vss. 1236-1237.

29. Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

30. Brackets added.

31. Bowman, *loc. cit.*

32. *Ibid.*



to suggest solutions to floating problems. Both emphasize the significance of the middle class. *Hervis* describes minutely the financial transactions at the Fairs and persists in letting a convinced nobleman speak of his noblest and most gallant pursuits in terms of money.<sup>33</sup> *Ansej's* contains references to the Fairs which are known to the author of *Hervis*. Pepin's son, given as Charles li Chaus (14555), "Dis festes fist . . ./Une de Bar, deus en mist en Provins, /L'autre de Troies, la quarte de Laigni . . ." (vss. 14562-14564), all well known to the reader of *Hervis*. In *Ansej's*, the bourgeois are influential. Bauche calls down upon Pepin the blessings of God for his concession that neither army at Santerre is to harm in any way "chastel ne borc ne ville" (4341 ff.). As for matrilineal prestige, both *Hervis* and *Ansej's* emphasize it. Whereas *Hervis*, however, leaves us convinced that the nobility derived from the mother or wife is perfectly sufficient to establish a noble family, the question appears tragically confused in *Ansej's*. Taking MS N of *Ansej's* as we have it now in Dr. Green's edition,<sup>34</sup> we find that the attitude toward the most powerful Ludie is ambivalent. Sympathetic in *Girbert*,<sup>35</sup> and mostly so in *Yon*, where she appears loyal to the Loherecs and to her husband except for a sudden reversal at the end,<sup>36</sup> she appears, in *Ansej's* as a "scheming, vengeful Lady Macbeth."<sup>37</sup> Unlike Biatrix in *Hervis*, however, Ludie is not able to establish herself in the end. She dies slain by her husband (8764 f.), and the women, her companions, are practically wiped out. As a result of the women's success gained at too great cost, ". . . en tote Flandre n'a a paines moillier" (8896).

Biatrix in *Hervis* proves victorious over prejudice and hostility. Ludie in *Ansej's* appears and disappears with cataclysmic pathos. The region of Ludie's activity is Flanders.<sup>38</sup> The negotiator for peace after the battle of Santerre is Ligiers, "li saint home de Flandre le pays" (9055 ff.). "Li per de Flandre . . ." (10134) are the men most vitally interested in avenging their count Bauche. This reference to Flanders brings us back to the distinction made by E. Chapin between the socio-economic conditions in Flanders and Champagne in the twelfth century: "les nobles, en Flandre, désertent les villes et y sont remplacés par une classe patricienne de bourgeois . . ."<sup>39</sup> In *Ansej's*, the Flemish noblemen, especially Bauche, are not able to hold their own. Ludie dies, her women are wiped out, the future of

33. Cf. *RR*, XXXVII (1946), 151 ff.

34. The three parts of *Ansej's* may have been either separate poems or added later to a primitive version which contained only Part I. Cf. Green, p. 33.

35. Cf. Bowman, *op. cit.*, p. 134; Green, *Ansej's*, p. 51.

36. *Yon*, ed. Mitchneck. For the sudden reversal, see vss. 8756-8764.

37. Cf. Green, *Ansej's*, p. 51.

38. For the identification of Ludie with Richilde de Hainaut cf. Green, *Ansej's*, p. 51. For further historical identifications, cf. the same *PMLA*, LVIII (1943), 911-919, and *MLN*, LXI (1941), 329-337.

39. E. Chapin, *Les Villes de foires de Champagne des origines au début du XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, 1937, pp. 138 ff. For the discussion of Chapin's study with reference to *Hervis*, cf. *RR*, XXXVII (1946), 152 ff.

the race of noblemen is seriously jeopardized. The situation in Champagne is different: "*les nobles pouvaient en Champagne vivre marchandement . . . ils restaient donc dans les villes [Troyes, Provins, Lagny, etc.] et s'adaptèrent aux tendances économiques de leur temps . . .*"<sup>40</sup> Familiar with *Anseïs*, or in more general terms, with some socio-economic problems as they affected Flanders, the author of *Hervis* was able to set off against the background of that tragic confusion, the serene picture of a hero, son of a rich *vilain*, and noble through his mother and wife, who manages to live both nobly and *marchandement* in the sphere of the Fairs of Champagne.

ALFRED ADLER

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40. Chapin, *ibid.* Italics and brackets added. Cf. *RR*, XXXVII (1946), 151.



## DID MONTAIGNE BETRAY SEBOND?

IN THE perennial debate over Montaigne's Christianity the main issue has long been his treatment of Raymond Sebond. This question has all too often been judged *en gros* and in the light of previous assumptions about his religion as a whole. Yet it offers a quantity of factual evidence that points to certain conclusions when judged with only one assumption: that Montaigne, as revealed elsewhere in his life and work, is not a deliberate and confirmed liar. This assumption may, I think, safely be made.

To be sure, some readers feel that his ideas about immortality and the good life are incompatible with the Christian belief he professed; but the Church in his time, even the Papal examiners, did not think so. Some consider his Christianity less a conviction than an expedient for peace and order; but they do not explain the mass of evidence that points to sincere conviction. Some see ironic lip-service in his statements that only Divine Grace leads to perfect goodness and truth, since he accepts his lack of Grace with such passive contentment; but his irony everywhere else is perfectly clear, and here no irony is clear.

Still other readers feel that he may be just a trifle ironical or insincere about religion. But to my mind a man as concerned with sincerity and religion as he was cannot be halfway in earnest. Since he chose to defend Christianity as perfect and true, to be insincere at all about it he must be wilfully insincere; and since he constantly proclaimed his sincerity, to be wilfully insincere he must be a confirmed liar. Whether his treatment of Sebond proves him so is what I propose to examine here. My only crucial assumption will be that the rest of his life and work does not.

### I. THE PROBLEM

Over twenty years ago one of the leading students of Montaigne's religion, Joseph Coppin, wrote that the long battle over the sincerity of the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond" had been won: "On a renoncé à voir, dans cette *Apologie*, une feinte habile, par laquelle Montaigne aurait entrepris de ruiner la religion, en se donnant l'air de la défendre."<sup>1</sup> This judgment, already foreshadowed by Grace Norton,<sup>2</sup> has been echoed by such scholars as A. Forest in 1929,<sup>3</sup> Jean Plattard in 1935,<sup>4</sup> Marcel Raymond and Albert Thibaudet in 1937.<sup>5</sup>

1. *Montaigne, traducteur de Raymond Sebon*, Lille, Morel, 1925, p. 141.

2. *Studies in Montaigne*, New York and London, Macmillan, 1904, p. 6.

3. "Montaigne humaniste et théologien," *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, XVIII (1929), 61.

4. *Etat présent des études sur Montaigne*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1935, p. 64.

5. Raymond in his review of Dréano, *La Pensée religieuse de Montaigne*, and Citoleux, *Le Vrai Montaigne, théologien et soldat*, in *Humanisme et Renaissance*, IV (1937), 346. Thibaudet in Montaigne, *Essais*, Paris, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, N. R. F., 1937, p. 1095.

Yet meanwhile the presumably abandoned view of Montaigne as a perfidious unbeliever has been maintained as strongly as ever by Arthur Armaingaud from 1924 until his death in 1935,<sup>6</sup> Elie Faure in 1926,<sup>7</sup> Léon Brunschvicg in 1927 and 1944,<sup>8</sup> André Gide in 1929,<sup>9</sup> and François Tavera in 1932.<sup>10</sup> Obviously Montaigne's sincerity is not unanimously beyond question. Thus Samuel F. Will concludes that "nothing has been settled by these presentations of the different aspects of Montaigne's religion,"<sup>11</sup> and Jean Guiton that "ces polémiques sont toujours très vives, et il y a fort à parier qu'elles ne s'éteindront jamais."<sup>12</sup>

This is curious, however; for never have so many good arguments been advanced in favor of Montaigne's religious sincerity as in these last twenty years. Four Catholic churchmen have made the greatest contributions: Coppin in *Montaigne, traducteur de Raymond Sebon* (1925), Forest in "Montaigne humaniste et théologien" (1929), Hermann Janssen in *Montaigne fidéiste* (1930),<sup>13</sup> and Maturin Dréano in *La Pensée religieuse de Montaigne* (1936).<sup>14</sup> A Catholic layman, Marc Citoleux, has even presented Montaigne as a good medieval theologian and disciple of Sebon.<sup>15</sup> Of all the specialists in Montaigne only Armaingaud considered him perfidious, whereas Villey, Strowski, Plattard, Lanson, Louis Cons and Jacob Zeitlin found him a frail believer but not insincere. Why then may we not consider the problem settled?

- The answer is, I think, the obvious one. The three main objections to Montaigne's sincerity have not yet been adequately met. His morality seems primarily natural and only incidentally Christian. He sometimes seems to hint to the reader not to take him at his word. He seems to have betrayed Sebon, and perhaps Christianity as well, in the "Apologie de Raimond Sebon."

- The first objection has been met probably about as well as it can be.
- Nearly all the defenders of Montaigne's sincerity have discussed it and concluded that the discrepancy between his moral principles and those of Christ does not preclude his belief. Especially sound are the discussions by

6. In Montaigne, *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Conard, 1924-1939, 11 vols., *passim*.

7. *Montaigne et ses trois premiers-nés*, Paris, Crès, 1926, pp. vi-vii, 7-13, 25-30, 45-47, 54-55, etc.

8. *Le Progrès de la conscience dans la philosophie occidentale*, Paris, Alcan, 1927, pp. 125-126; *Descartes et Pascal, lecteurs de Montaigne*, New York and Paris, Brentano's, 1944, pp. 64-75, 82-90.

9. *Essai sur Montaigne*, Paris, Schiffrin, 1929, *passim*; in *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, N. R. F., XV, 1-68.

10. *Le Problème humain: L'Idée d'humanité dans Montaigne*, Paris, Champion, 1932, pp. 110-141, etc.

11. "[Survey of Renaissance Studies:] French Literature," *MLQ*, II (September 1941), 456.

12. "Où en est le débat sur la religion de Montaigne?" *RR*, XXXV (April 1944), 98.

13. Nijmegen and Utrecht, Dekker, Van de Wegt and Van Leeuwen, 1930.

14. Paris, Beauchesne, 1936.

15. *Le Vrai Montaigne, théologien et soldat*, Paris, Lethielleux, 1937.

Dréano and Citoleux in the books already mentioned and by Coppin in his article "La Morale de Montaigne est-elle purement naturelle?"<sup>16</sup>

The second objection rests mainly on three passages in the *Essais*. Armaingaud, Brunschvicg and Faure make much of Montaigne's remark "Nous sommes Chrestiens à mesme titre que nous sommes ou Perigordins ou Alemans."<sup>17</sup> But Janssen has shown how greatly they distort the meaning of this statement by quoting it out of context.<sup>18</sup> It is not an explanation of the origin of religion in the soul, but a bitter denunciation of the religion of Montaigne's time.

Armaingaud leans hardest on the statement "Joint qu'à l'aventure ay-je quelque obligation particuliere à ne dire qu'à demy, à dire confusément, à dire discordamment."<sup>19</sup> Flatly rejecting all Villey's theories, he makes this remark a key to explain all Montaigne's inconsistencies as his way of attacking religion hypocritically and safely. But in context the remark is only faintly suggestive. For several pages Montaigne has been discussing his method. His disorder, he explains, is deliberate; he prefers "l'alleure poetique, à sauts et à gambades"; he wants the material to make its own order and its own headings. He suggests humorously that for lack of weightiness, his confusion may arrest the reader's attention; he toys with the idea of deliberate obscurity and rejects it; he says that he made his chapters longer in Book III to exact some effort from the reader; and he concludes with the sentence in question. This could mean what Armaingaud claims it does; but it could equally well be an innocent, comically deprecatory ending fully in the spirit of Montaigne. It is reminiscent of a statement in "De l'inconstance de nos actions" that cannot be held suspect: "Je n'ay rien à dire de moy, entierement, simplement, et solidement, sans confusion et sans meslange, ny en un mot."<sup>20</sup> It is a frail base for an entire theory that Montaigne is insincere.

Gide's favorite key is this: "Un suffisant lecteur descouvre souvant és escrits d'autrui des perfections autres que celles que l'auteur y a mises et apperceües, et y preste des sens et des visages plus riches."<sup>21</sup> But this is no hint to read between the lines; it is rather a reminder that a *suffisant lecteur* may read more into a book than the author ever intended.

In short, this second objection that Montaigne in some key phrase hints to the reader not to take him at his word is weak.

The third objection remains, and it is the strongest. Even those who be-

16. In *Mélanges de philologie et d'histoire publiés à l'occasion du cinquantenaire de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université Catholique de Lille*, Lille, Facultés Catholiques, 1927.

17. Montaigne, *Essais*, Villey ed., Paris, Alcan, 1930-1931, 3 vols., II, xii, 225. All references to the *Essais* in this article will be to this edition unless otherwise indicated. —For Armaingaud, see Montaigne, *Œuvres complètes*, I, 180; IV, 121; for Brunschvicg, *Descartes et Pascal, lecteurs de Montaigne*, p. 74; for Faure, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

18. *Op. cit.*, pp. 2-3, 46-49, 142-163.

19. Montaigne, *Essais*, III, ix, 424; cf. *Œuvres complètes*, Armaingaud ed., I, 1, 93 ff.

20. II, i, 16.

21. I, xxiv, 240. Gide, *Œuvres complètes*, XV, 3, 20, 44.

lieve in Montaigne's sincerity are dismayed by this apology, which Villey calls "étrange"<sup>22</sup> and Plattard "singulière."<sup>23</sup> "Montaigne," says Villey elsewhere, "n'a cure de l'opinion du lecteur sur Raymond Sebond."<sup>24</sup> "Il lesoutient," writes Cons, "si on ose dire, commela corde soutient le pendu."<sup>25</sup>

The usual explanation offered by these critics is that Montaigne either forgets Sebond or does not realize how he and Sebond differ. The first view is at best *subject à une longue interprétation*; the second is unacceptable unless we forget how Montaigne nearly annihilated Sebond's claims for his *Theologia naturalis* in translating it. The inadequacy of these explanations of Montaigne's apparent betrayal of Sebond in the "Apologie" is largely responsible for the persistence of a notion that clashes with virtually everything we know about Montaigne: the notion that he is perfidious.

## II. THE DÉMON MALIN

Of all who consider Montaigne perfidious, Sainte-Beuve seems still to be the strongest, and with good reason.<sup>26</sup> He is probably the greatest writer who both knew Montaigne as well and wrote on him as fully as he did. He claims him as one of his masters.<sup>27</sup> And the Montaigne of the *Port-Royal* is one of the fine portraits of literature.

Yet brilliant as it is, its fidelity is dubious. The arguments that support it are inconclusive, often inaccurate, and based on an outright misrepresentation. Sainte-Beuve himself seems to have seen its weakness later on and discarded it.

Familiar as the portrait is, we must summarize and analyze it carefully before we can criticize it fairly.

Sainte-Beuve starts Book III ("Pascal") of the *Port-Royal* with the *Entretien avec M. de Saci* and sets the tone dramatically:

Il m'a toujours semblé que la forme sous laquelle le démon de l'incrédulité a dû le plus tenter Pascal, ç'a été celle de Montaigne: et en effet ce diable-là pour lui devait être bien tentant. Esprit, langage, raillerie, hardiesse, tant de choses lui en allaient! Vite il mit la Croix en travers, pour enrayer le penchant.<sup>28</sup>

He praises Pascal's exposé of the "scepticisme à double et triple fond de Montaigne, et de l'humiliation que ce moqueur inflige à l'homme, par lui ravalé quasi au-dessous des animaux," and quotes M. de Saci's reply at length. He divides philosophers into two schools, that of Epictetus who believes in conscience and that of Montaigne who does not. Before going on

22. *Les Essais de Michel de Montaigne*, Paris, Malfère, 1932, p. 64.

23. *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

24. In Bédier and Hazard, *Histoire de la littérature française illustrée*, Paris, Larousse, 1923-1924, 2 vols., I, 205.

25. *Anthologie littéraire de la Renaissance française*, New York, Holt, 1931, p. 143.

26. This despite Janssen, who once laughs off the portrait of Montaigne in the *Port-Royal* as "amusante" (*op. cit.*, p. 77 n. 1).

27. *Causeries du lundi, Table générale et analytique*, Paris, Garnier, undated, p. 45.

28. *Port-Royal*, Paris, Hachette, 1867-1871, 7 vols., II, 386-387. The remarks about Montaigne in the first two books add nothing vital to the portrait; see I, 7, 46n, 83, 240n, 274, 358n; II, 91, 340n; etc.

with Pascal, he says, it is worth our while to study Montaigne face to face—"autant que le *face-à-face* est possible avec un tel homme."<sup>29</sup> Even after Pascal, there may be something to say.

So Chapter II shows us "Montaigne à la barre de Port-Royal." Warned by Pascal, the Jansenists see in Montaigne the free thought, the hateful ego, the dangerous charm, that others found later in the eighteenth century: "C'est leur ennemi, leur mauvais génie et comme la bête noire du désert, un Sphinx moqueur. Ils se signent en passant devant lui" (page 397). Still more is he Pascal's great enemy, the fox in his bosom. He may be studied through Pascal, who had only two aims in all his life and all his work: to fight the Jesuits in the *Provinciales*, to ruin and annihilate Montaigne in the *Pensées* (397-398).

Nicole and Arnauld judged Montaigne more grossly and less well; but their severity in *La Logique de Port-Royal* is justified. For in him they are trying to uproot the still healthy tree that will become the tortuous, venomous forest of the *moi*. Montaigne's *moi* is not quite that of Rousseau, but "c'est moins le principe que le ton qui est changé" (404n). May we then safely study Montaigne? Yes, for time kills the venom. Let us enter him candidly, forcing no contrasts but alert to seize them when they appear. The prospects are good.

Entering him casually as he entered his subjects, we are at first surprised at the severity of the Jansenists: "Il n'a l'air de rien; il ne veut rien de vous; s'il a une fin, il la cache bien" (407). He simply rambles along telling stories, drawing a simple moral here and there: "un amuseur avant tout amusé." What does it matter if we disagree or disapprove? He is not teaching us about man, he is merely telling us about Montaigne; that is all.

But wait: that is not all: "c'est nous en même temps que lui, c'est tout l'homme et la nature." Even Pascal failed to show that Montaigne is no philosophical system, nor even primarily a skeptic:

Non, Montaigne, c'est tout simplement la nature:

La nature pure, et civilisée pourtant, dans sa large étoffe, dans ses affections et dispositions générales moyennes, aussi bien que dans ses humeurs et ses saillies les plus particulières, et même ses manies;—la *Nature au complet sans la Grâce*. (409.)

All his life was the easy life of nature: "Montaigne, en tout (plus je le considère, et plus je m'y confirme), c'est donc la pure nature."

There is some Montaigne in all of us. Any taste, humor or passion, any diversion, amusement or whim, in which Christianity has no part and might never have existed—is not insulted or denied, but casually ignored—what is this but *du Montaigne*? In the probably deliberate confusion of the final versions of the *Essais*, if we pin down the thought as Pascal did, we find that three quarters of Montaigne is this almost innocent forgetfulness of Christianity: poetic epicurism, erudition, love of writing for its own sake:

29. *Ibid.*, II, 394.

Voilà peut-être, au vrai et au naïf, les trois quarts de Montaigne, et ce qui, pour n'être pas chrétien, n'est certes pas réputé impie, en détail, là où on le rencontre chez les auteurs qu'on s'attend à trouver profanes, ou chez nous-même: mais l'autre quart chez Montaigne a donné l'éveil; en mettant expressément à part la religion, en la faisant si grande et si haute, et la voulant si fort révéler, qu'il lui coupe toute communication avec le reste de l'homme, il s'est trahi; on s'est alarmé. Ce que chez l'ordinaire des auteurs on laisse passer ou qu'on traite comme des curiosités indifférentes, des naïvetés et des enfances de l'homme, a paru grave chez lui; tout a pris un sens; on l'a vu partout cauteleux. (415-416.)

But M. de Saci would not condone this paganism. "Où est le Christianisme?" he would ask. Seen thus as the absence of Christianity, *le Montaigne* is everywhere: "Chacun a son lopin en lui." Are you a critic, a philologist, a moralist like La Bruyère, a theologian fond of erudition like Huet, a Saint François de Sales in love with writing, an "écrivain artiste" ever beginning anew (like Sainte-Beuve): "Prenez garde, Chrétien, c'est du Montaigne." For Montaigne is one of the great exponents of man's eternal paganism:

Montaigne est, à ma conjecture, l'homme qui a su le plus de flots. Du flux et du reflux, il ne semble en avoir cure, ni de la grande loi régulière qui enchaîne la mer aux cieux: mais les flots en détail, il en sait de toute couleur et de toute risée; il y plonge en des profondeurs diverses, et en rapporte des perles et toutes sortes de coquilles. Surtout il s'y berce à la surface, et s'y joue, et les fait jouer devant nous sous prétexte de se mirer, jusqu'à ce qu'il en vienne un tomber juste à nos pieds, et qui soit notre propre miroir: par où il nous tient et nous ramène. (420-421.)

Enough of this prelude, the "trois quarts": Chapter III leads us to "le dernier quart, le centre de la place . . . l'arrière-fond réfléchi et voulu, qui donne à tout un sens et en fait comme une amorce" (425). Montaigne's method here, in the places that give him away, may justly be called perfidious. He exempts religion from discussion as too respectable until it almost disappears, but talks about it all the while. His whole book shows that he would like to be free of all but the ceremony. He died a good Christian death: well, we cannot judge his heart at that moment, but we can judge his book; and such chapters as "Des prières" and "Du repentir" are almost as conclusive as the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond." The occasional sound religious remarks prove nothing:

C'est bon sens, oubli parfois, ruse peut-être. On ne sait jamais sur quoi compter avec ces sortes d'hommes, Bayle, Montaigne; on peut dire d'eux, comme Pascal de l'Opinion, qu'ils sont d'autant plus fourbes qu'ils ne le sont pas toujours. (427.)

Montaigne's *mots sales* about man give him away: "Ces seuls accents le jugeraient." Where Pascal humbles man sadly, Montaigne almost rubs his hands with joy. Men have tried to show his Christianity, but a mere



glance should have warned them: "je ne vois pas ce qu'on gagnerait, à toute force, à faire conclure qu'il peut bien avoir paru très-bon catholique, sauf à n'avoir guère été chrétien" (428). In every thinking author there is a moral atmosphere in which some ideas can flourish, others not. The ideas of repentance, conversion, moral improvement and immortality will not fit in Montaigne, who has no faith in repentance and believes only in youth.

The center of centers is the "Apologie":

Nous sommes au centre: ici tout porte, tout est ménagé, calculé, tortueux, disant le contraire en apparence de ce que le maître conclut à part soi et qu'il insinue. Mais, à presser l'intention, le soi-disant pyrrhonisme ne tient pas; ce rôdeur universel sait où en venir. Je concevrais un chapitre intitulé, non pas *le Christianisme de Montaigne*, mais *le Dogmatisme de Montaigne*, qui serait précisément tiré de là. L'appareil est géométrique chez Spinoza, il est sceptique chez l'autre; mais le fond ne me paraît pas plus douteux. (431.)

This essay was apparently composed for the charming and unprudish Marguerite de Valois, sister of Henry III and wife of Henry of Navarre, who ended in piety and took as her almoner Vincent de Paul, future tutor of the future Cardinal de Retz ("Retz, la reine Marguerite et Montaigne, voilà bien le trio qu'on imagine"). Montaigne had translated Sebond at his father's request; the work had aroused two main objections; apparently meaning to answer these, he calls his chapter "Apologie de Raimond Sebond."

He begins with the critics who consider reason a dangerous support for revelation—"mais il faut voir avec quel respect affiché et quel ménagement!" He admits that we enjoy faith only by human means, as the wickedness of Christians proves. What is he getting at? He is obviously not concerned for Sebond. Instead of defending him, he is going to refute him; or he wants a chance to talk covertly and at random about religion. His only praise of Sebond is damningly faint.

Coming to the critics who say Sebond proves nothing, how frank he acts! We must shake these up more roughly, he says; they are more dangerous and malicious than the others. But it is he who doubles his malice. In the guise of refuting them, he outdoes them in maintaining the impotence of isolated human reason in the matter of belief.

Le rôle de Montaigne en tout ce chapitre, une fois bien compris, est singulièrement dramatique; il y a toute une comédie qu'il joue, et dont il ne prétend faire dupe que qui le veut bien.

Montaigne sur Sebond joue le même personnage que Bayle sur les Manichéens.

Ce qu'il veut en fin de compte, c'est (ne l'oublions pas) de faire la vérité des choses de la révélation si haute, si uniquement fondée en soi, si à pic et plantée toute seule à la pointe de son rocher, qu'on n'aille guère songer à y mettre pied: *fantôme à estonner les gents!* voilà le mobile et le but. Tout ce qu'il dit, chemin faisant, contre la certitude humaine par rapport à toute question, est bien

moins pour ruiner l'homme même en nature et en réalité que pour ruiner la croyance transcendante au cœur de l'homme; son objet atteint, et à ceux qui admettraient que la foi à de telles choses est chimère, il saurait bien (j'imagine) que dire à l'oreille, en causant, sur sa manière de concevoir le monde et l'homme, et de convenir de certains points. Le scepticisme exorbitant de ce chapitre n'est qu'une méthode de *grand tour* pour arriver. (434-435.)

Within this plan countless details weave in and out. Montaigne is at his most vigorous, with an inexhaustible store of arguments, facts, images. Here is the writer off on a spree. Here too is "le rire *inextinguible* de l'homme déchu . . . ce mauvais spasme convulsif" (435-436).

- From the beginning Montaigne ridicules man, "qu'il suppose isolé et *dépourvu de la Grâce et connaissance divine*." He makes fun of man's claim that the universe is made for him; and in so doing he does not realize, or rather he realizes perfectly well, that he is refuting Sebond. To beat down man's presumption, he says, he builds up the virtues and skills of the animals. Though here he supplies much material for Pascal, what a difference between his pleasure and Pascal's grief! He makes fools of the philosophers. He warns Queen Margaret against using his "dernier tour d'escrime," that of giving up one's arms to disarm one's enemy, and then goes on using it himself to show man's incapacity for truth. Again Pascal follows: "Les *Pensées* de celui-ci ne sont, à les bien prendre, que le chapitre de l'*Apologie de Sebond* refait avec prud'homie" (439). But again what a contrast:

Là où l'un se mire et se berce au brisant des flots, l'autre cingle et rame. L'un s'égaie et s'enivre en son naufrage; l'autre, nuit et jour, sous l'étoile ou sous la nue, nage à l'aide d'un débris vers la plage de la patrie éternelle. Misère, faiblesse et néant, des deux côtés c'est le refrain; onde sur onde, sable sur sable, univers mouvant . . . Montaigne . . . se gaudit et gausse: ce sont misères d'animal.—Misères de grand seigneur, misères de roi dépossédé, nous crie Pascal! Courage et prière! il faut reconquérir son royaume. (440.)

The "Apologie" ends with a pompous quotation from Plutarch to the effect that God alone *is*, and all else is flux. This context makes it very suspect, giving it "un sens plutôt spinosiste et *panthéiste*." Make God unattainable, and we can do without him.

By now Montaigne's purpose is clear, and we may sum up:

Au demeurant, notre idée sur Montaigne, s'est éclaircie, ce semble, et a passé de la conjecture à la certitude; nous tenons la clef glissante, et, bon gré mal gré, si glissante et si sorcière qu'elle soit, et fût-elle même plus sorcière que cette clef du Conte de la *Barbe-Bleue*, elle nous reste à la main; nous pouvons désormais ouvrir chez lui, si l'envie nous en prend, toute l'enfilade de ses pensées et arrière-pensées, ce labyrinthe de cabinets et de chambres où il se plait, sans qu'on sache jamais, non plus que de Pygmalion, dans laquelle il couche.

Il n'y a de riant que l'apparence. Montaigne, en ce chapitre et dans tout son livre, a fait comme un démon malin, un enchanteur maudit, qui, vous prenant



par la main, et vous introduisant avec mille discours séduisants dans le labyrinthe des opinions, vous dit à chaque pas, à chaque marque que vous voulez faire pour vous retrouver: "Tout ceci n'est qu'erreur ou doute, n'y comptez pas, ne regardez pas trop, en espoir de vous diriger au retour; la seule chose sûre est cette lampe que voici; jetez le reste: cette lampe sacrée nous suffit." Et quand il vous a bien promené, égaré et lassé dans les mille dédales, tout d'un coup il souffle, ou d'une chiquenaude il éteint; et l'on n'entend plus qu'un petit rire.

Que succède-t-il alors? Est-ce le doute universel qu'il a voulu; et ce doute-là, quand il est final, ne forme-t-il pas une conclusion immense? Quelle est-elle en effet? un *petit Juif marchant à pas comptés*, Spinosa, va vous le dire: dans l'embarras où vous êtes, la lampe éteinte et le labyrinthe écroulé, c'est lui qui vous recueillera. Un grand ciel morne, un profond univers roulant, muet, inconnu, où de temps en temps, par places et par phases, s'assemble, se produit et se renouvelle la vie; l'homme éclosant un moment, brillant et mourant avec les mille insectes, sur cette île d'herbe flottante dans un marais: voilà, mathématiques ou pyrrhonisme de forme à part, la grande solution suprême. Tout ce que Montaigne y a prodigué de riant et de flatteur au regard n'est que pour faire rideau à l'abîme, et, comme il le dirait, pour *gazonner* la tombe.

Le Spinosisme donc (je prends exprès le nom le plus terne) comme bassin et couvercle d'airain à cette mer dont nous avons vu trembler et rire en tout sens l'écume et les flots! (441-442.)

Finally, after nine brilliant pages on Montaigne's style and his place in the language, Sainte-Beuve ends his portrait<sup>30</sup> by conjuring up the imaginary funerals of Montaigne and M. de Saci: Montaigne followed by great names, La Fontaine, Molière, La Bruyère, Bayle, Le Sage, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Voltaire, a host of lesser writers, all of us perhaps; M. de Saci only by weeping nuns and monks. But at Montaigne's funeral only Mlle de Gournay weeps, and that *par cérémonie*.

Et ce *moi* humain du défunt qui jouirait tant s'il entendait, où est-il? car c'est là toute la question. Est-il? et s'il est, tout n'est-il pas changé à l'instant? tout ne devient-il pas immense? Quelle comédie jouent donc tous ces gens, qui la plupart, et à travers leur qualité d'*illustres*, passaient pourtant pour raisonnables? Qui mènent-ils, et où le mènent-ils? où est la bénédiction? où est la prière? Je le crains, Pascal seul, s'il est du cortège, a prié.

.....

Or, s'il y a une vérité, si tout n'est pas vain (auquel cas la vie de M. de Saci en vaudrait bien encore une autre), s'il y a une morale,—j'entends une morale absolue,—et si la vie aboutit, lequel de ces deux hommes a le plus fait, et le plus sûrement ensemencé son sillon sur la terre? A l'heure où tout se juge, lequel sera trouvé moins léger? (452-453.)

Now this striking portrait contains many unfair and incorrect quotations and statements. An unfair quotation is this from Pascal: "J'auerois aimé

30. The references to Montaigne in the later books of the *Port-Royal* are interesting but not necessary here.

de tout mon cœur le ministre d'une si grande vengeance, si, étant humble disciple de l'Eglise par la foi, il eût suivi les règles de la morale."<sup>31</sup> In the *Entretien*, *humble* does not appear; and what follows makes it clear that Pascal is not casting doubt on Montaigne's belief. Sainte-Beuve, by including *humble* and breaking off with *la morale*, leaves us less certain which way to interpret it.

An incorrect quotation is this. M. de Saci explains that he has avoided reading Montaigne "parce que ses paroles ne paraissent pas sortir d'un grand fonds d'humilité et de piété." Sainte-Beuve quotes him as saying "parce que ses paroles ne viennent point de l'humilité et de la piété chrétienne, et qu'elles renversent les fondements de toute connoissance, et par conséquent de la religion même."<sup>32</sup>

It is unfair to say that in the *Entretien* "Pascal s'attaque sans marchander aux deux chefs des deux principales sectes morales du monde infidèle." Pascal does not consider Montaigne an infidel, and the statement may be taken to mean that he does; and the *Entretien* states that Pascal "fit de grands éloges de ces deux esprits," and shows him apologizing for praising Montaigne so much.<sup>33</sup> Nor is it quite fair to say that Montaigne lowers man "quasi au-dessous des animaux" considering his pains to place man neither above nor below them.<sup>34</sup>

It is untrue to say in the sense in which Sainte-Beuve does that Montaigne in the "Apologie" "commence tout d'abord par se moquer de l'homme, qu'il suppose isolé et dépourvu de la Grâce et connaissance divine" and "termine par une pompeuse citation de Plutarque." We shall return to these misstatements, which are the center of Sainte-Beuve's argument.

Inaccuracies like these might pass if Sainte-Beuve's proofs were very strong. But out of the colorful background of imaginary funeral processions, Jansenists crossing themselves at the name of Montaigne, and mocking sorcerers leading us to perdition in the labyrinth of thought, there emerge the following real arguments:

1) Judged by his consequences, two centuries after Pascal, Montaigne seems to belong with the freethinkers and unbelievers who have liked him: Bayle, Hume, Hobbes, Diderot, *et al.*

2) Montaigne did not consider the *moi* as *haïssable*.

3) Montaigne is *la Nature au complet sans la Grâce*.

4) Montaigne is the great enemy of Pascal and of all Port-Royal.

31. Page 389. See Pascal, *Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Ollendorff, 1923-1931, 3 vols., III, 401. It is true that when Sainte-Beuve wrote this, standard editions of Pascal were still printing *humble disciple*; but he well knew that they were not trustworthy (*Port-Royal*, II, 389n).

32. Page 388. Cf. Pascal, *op. cit.*, p. 400. The italics are mine.

33. *Port-Royal*, II, 385; Pascal, *op. cit.*, pp. 391, 401, 403, 405.

34. *Port-Royal*, II, 387; *Essais*, II, xii, 252-254, etc. Cf. George Boas, *The Happy Beast in French Thought of the Seventeenth Century*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1933, pp. 8-9, etc.

5) Montaigne seems merely forgetful of Christianity most of the time, but the "fourth quarter" shows how we are to interpret this.

6) The fourth quarter reveals Montaigne's perfidy in his humiliation of man, his *mots sales*, his mockery, and his moral atmosphere, which precludes belief in immortality, repentance, or moral progress.

7) Montaigne sets religion so high only to isolate it from us.

8) The "Apologie" is the center that gives Montaigne away. He assumes—man isolated and without Divine Grace, thus contradicting Sebond; he sneers at man and concludes that man cannot know God.

Now how sound and how conclusive are these eight points?

Point one: Montaigne belongs with the unbelievers who have enjoyed him.—But Pascal also enjoyed him, and Catholic scholars today are among the staunchest supporters of his sincerity. Sainte-Beuve constantly goes out of his way to put Montaigne in unbelieving company; but this proves nothing.

Point two: Montaigne did not consider the *moi* as *haïssable*.—But this is no criterion of belief or unbelief. Even Pascal, who coins the phrase, does not accuse Montaigne of duplicity.

Point three: Montaigne is pure nature without Divine Grace.—"Nature" as Sainte-Beuve uses it here means the three quarters, and depends on the fourth. "Without Divine Grace" is assertion, not proof.

Point four: Montaigne is the great enemy of Pascal and of Port-Royal.—True, but in what respect? Not in that he doubts; but, as Sainte-Beuve admits, in that he is content to rest his mind in doubt, finding ignorance and incuriosity a pleasant and soft pillow. To Pascal this is monstrous. But Montaigne's position is sound. If man is helpless without God's special aid, if this comes not from our efforts but only from God's will, then it is logical though not traditional to await it passively. No wonder Montaigne was a fox in Pascal's bosom, no wonder Pascal strains to convince men in the *Pensées*—for he does—that Montaigne's position is untenable.

Point five: Three quarters of the time Montaigne seems merely forgetful.—True.

Point six: The fourth part reveals Montaigne's perfidy in his humiliation of man, his *mots sales*, his mockery, his moral atmosphere.—The humiliation, the *mots sales*, the mockery, concern attitude and not opinion. The opinion Pascal shares. The attitude, as Pascal knew, is no proof of unbelief.—The atmosphere precludes repentance? But the sallies against repentance in "Du repentir," which Sainte-Beuve quotes out of context, are aimed not at the real thing but at what too often passes for it. Montaigne insists that it be true, wholehearted, sent from God (III, ii, 58, 64).—No immortality? True. It is curious that Sainte-Beuve makes no more of this.—No moral improvement? Not as a preparation for eternity, true; but Montaigne practices and preaches constant effort to approach his moral ideal.

Point seven: Montaigne sets religion so high only to isolate it from

us.—There is no evidence that this was his aim. His doctrine was acceptable to the Church in his time. The point is unproven.

Point eight: The "Apologie" gives Montaigne away. He assumes man isolated and without Divine Grace and concludes that man cannot know God.—But Montaigne never assumes, supposes, implies or posits, as Sainte-Beuve suggests, that man *as such* is intrinsically so deprived. And Sainte-Beuve is careful not to include in his quotation what Montaigne adds, that this Divine Grace and knowledge is the entire dignity and strength of man. Montaigne actually says this:

Considerons donc pour cette heure l'homme seul, sans secours étranger, armé seulement de ses armes, et despourveu de la grace et cognoissance divine, qui est tout son honneur, sa force et le fondement de son estre. Voyons combien il a de tenue en ce bel equipage. (II, xii, 234.)

He states here the purpose of the main part of the "Apologie." What follows fits his version of his purpose better than it does Sainte-Beuve's.

Here is Sainte-Beuve's version of the conclusion:

Montaigne . . . termine par une pompeuse citation de Plutarque et très-suspecte d'intention ici, pour dire que Dieu seul *Est*, et qu'à part lui, l'Eternel, le Nécessaire et l'Immuable, il n'y a que passage et écoulement de l'être. Vue en courant, cette page religieuse de Plutarque fait comme tenture; considérée de près, par le lieu où elle se trouve transposée et d'après ce qui précède, elle acquiert un sens plutôt spinosiste et *panthéiste*, comme on dit. (440.)

This whole argument depends on this being Montaigne's conclusion. And it is not. *After* the Plutarch quotation comes one from Seneca (man is vile unless he raises himself above humanity); then the conclusion:

Voylà un bon mot et un utile desir, mais pareillement absurde. Car de faire la poignée plus grande que le poing, la brassée plus grande que le bras, et d'esperer enjamber plus que de l'estanduë de nos jambes, cela est impossible et monstrueux. Ny que l'homme se monte au dessus de soy et de l'humanité: car il ne peut voir que de ses yeux, ny saisir que de ses prises. Il s'esleuera si Dieu lui preste extraordinairement la main; il s'eslevera, abandonnant et renonçant à ses propres moyens, et se laissant hausser et soubselever par les moyens purement celestes.

C'est à nostre foy Chrestienne, non à sa vertu Stoique, de pretendre à cette divine et miraculeuse metamorphose. (II, xii, 544.)

In short, in his central point, the point on which all the others depend, Sainte-Beuve has gravely misstated the facts.<sup>35</sup> The rest of Montaigne, he

35. Even here a word of qualification is perhaps necessary. Marcel Raymond puts his finger on one of the great problems of Montaigne's religion in his article "Entre le fidéisme et le naturalisme (A propos de l'attitude religieuse de Montaigne)" in *Festschrift für Ernst Tappolet*, Basel, Schwabe, 1935, pp. 237-247. He points out that by Montaigne's own showing, nearly all mankind, himself apparently included, is "sans secours étranger, . . . despourveu de la grace et cognoissance divine," etc., and that Montaigne is so content on the human level that one can only assume that he prefers it. However (as Raymond recognizes), this proves only the incontestable importance of

admits, may be innocent; it is this sinister *arrière-fond* that taints the whole.

What remains if this *arrière-fond* is built on a vital misstatement? A theory, not a case; nothing proven, nothing very solid.

The illustrations are dazzling, to be sure. Pascal crossing himself against Montaigne. Montaigne the leader of the band of moral skeptics. Montaigne the fox in Pascal's bosom. Montaigne the parent tree of the tortuous, venomous forest of the *moi*, abode of suicides. Montaigne as Nature complete without Divine Grace. Montaigne as the spirit of all that leaves out Christianity: poetic epicurism, erudition, love of writing; the spirit of the critic, the philologist, the moralist, the learned priest, the charming saint, the writer ever beginning anew. Montaigne cradled on the surface of thought, playing idly in the waves. Montaigne the *démon malin*, the *enchanteur maudit*, leading you deep into the labyrinth of opinion, telling you to depend entirely on his lamp of faith, then putting out the lamp with a little laugh and leaving you with only Spinoza to save you. Montaigne as the center of the funeral where no one weeps.

These are pictures that we all remember. They are not faithful pictures of Montaigne.

There seem to be three main reasons for the infidelity of the portrait: exaggeration of Montaigne's contrast with Port-Royal, of his resemblance to eighteenth-century freethinkers such as Bayle, and distortion arising from a hasty effort to produce something new and co-ordinated about Montaigne from the Jansenist viewpoint. The first of these has been sufficiently indicated already.

The second reason has also been discussed, but not fully. It seems to originate in Sainte-Beuve's preoccupation with the consequences of Montaigne's thought. The reason he gives for hoping to add to what Pascal had said is that this may be possible two centuries later, when one has seen all the consequences (II, 394). To him the obvious consequences were the fondness of eighteenth-century freethinkers for Montaigne and their debt to him. Their opinion of him was also important. Meister's sketch of Montaigne in Grimm and Diderot's *Correspondance littéraire*,<sup>36</sup> which in 1853 Sainte-Beuve calls "peut-être ce que la critique française a produit là-dessus de plus juste, de mieux pensé et de mieux dit," was probably known to him in 1838, and may well be one source of the portrait in the *Port-Royal*:

Les vérités (dans son livre) sont enveloppées de tant de rêveries, si j'ose le dire, de tant d'enfantillages, qu'on n'est jamais tenté de lui supposer une in-

Sainte-Beuve's "three quarters." Montaigne does consider grace possible, even if apparently only for a few. When Sainte-Beuve implies that he does not, he seriously falsifies Montaigne's position.

36. Paris, Garnier, 1877-1882, 16 vols., X, 430-439.

tention sérieuse . . . Sa philosophie est un labyrinthe charmant où tout le monde aime à s'égarer, mais dont un penseur seul tient le fil.<sup>37</sup>

Most of all Sainte-Beuve associates Montaigne with Bayle. From his article of 1835 "Du génie critique et de Bayle"<sup>38</sup> to his *pensée* of 1865 where he calls these two and Horace "mes maîtres," he links them constantly. In the *Port-Royal* he does so eleven times and makes Bayle as well as Montaigne the opposite of Pascal: "Chez Bayle ou chez Montaigne, on sait du moins ce que cela veut dire . . . Ces sortes d'hommes, Bayle, Montaigne . . . sont d'autant plus fourbes qu'ils ne le sont pas toujours . . . Montaigne sur Sebond joue le même personnage que Bayle sur les Manichéens."<sup>39</sup> Partly an effect of his view of Montaigne, this seems to be even more a cause. Sainte-Beuve exaggerates Montaigne's resemblance to Bayle almost as constantly as his contrast with Pascal.

Most important, he twists Montaigne and his book to the point of distortion. He almost admits this in a footnote, though implying that casualness is the only alternative: "Ce qui se trouve vrai quand on presse et qu'on tord son livre, ne l'est pas également quand on ne fait que l'ouvrir et le feuilleter" (II, 442n). One of his letters reveals the pressure under which the portrait was composed. He was drawn from his Jansenists by Montaigne, intolerably tugged and perplexed by him, but determined to get out of him something co-ordinated, a little new, and true for all that—in three days.<sup>40</sup> Sainte-Beuve could work both fast and well if anyone could. But even he needed more than three days to achieve truth as well as novelty and neatness.

But is the Montaigne of the *Port-Royal* the Montaigne of Sainte-Beuve? It is usually assumed to be. As far as I know, Grace Norton is alone in calling his later view "a practical recantation";<sup>41</sup> and she gives no evidence for her position. But the picture of Montaigne that Sainte-Beuve gives us later suggests strongly that his opinion as well as his attitude changed, and that he doubted in later life the accuracy of the portrait in the *Port-Royal*.

It is true that Sainte-Beuve, so far as I know, never says this or suggests it clearly, and that the natural, a-Christian "trois quarts" remain the center

37. *Causeries du lundi*, Paris, Garnier, undated, VII, 314 (January 17, 1853). Zeitlin has already mentioned this as a possible source. See his translation of the *Essays*, New York, Knopf, 1934-1936, 3 vols., I, L.

38. *Portraits littéraires*, Paris, Garnier, undated, I, 366, 375-376 (December 1835).

39. *Port-Royal*, III, 422n; II, 427, 434. See also I, 46n, 274; II, 384n, 392, 396, 417, 448, 451; and an indirect link, III, 47.

40. On January 23, 1838, he wrote to Charles Labitte: "Aujourd'hui je suis plongé dans Montaigne qui m'a tiraillé avec toutes ses diversités plus qu'il n'a jamais fait aux humains; il jouirait bien, s'il me voyait, moi l'ami et le champion de Pascal contre lui, ainsi en peine et en perplexité à son sujet. Il faut en trois jours tirer de lui quelque chose de coordonné, de nouveau un peu, de vrai pourtant—ainsi je n'ai perdu aucune occasion de droite et de gauche, d'élargir mon sujet." (*Correspondance générale*, Paris, Stock, 1935-1942, 4 vols. [incomplete], II, 332.)

41. *Studies in Montaigne*, p. 5.



of his later picture of Montaigne. In the additions to the *Port-Royal* he does little to make his portrait less sinister. In 1842 he still speaks of Montaigne as a religious dissimulator.<sup>42</sup> Several times he contrasts him with Pascal, though merely because of his nonchalance.<sup>43</sup> Often he speaks of his skepticism, sometimes (though not too harshly) of his *malice*, once or twice of his mocking tone. As we have seen, he praises and quotes Meister's opinion of Montaigne, which may have influenced the *Port-Royal* portrait. Writing on La Boétie in 1853, he speaks of the "Montaigne sceptique, railleur et malin que nous connaissons," but mainly to contrast him with "un premier Montaigne jeune et ardent," "enthousiaste du bien."<sup>44</sup> This is all I find that even suggests the treacherous Montaigne; and none of it after 1842 is at all decisive.

Meanwhile from Sainte-Beuve's later works there emerges a very different Montaigne from the slippery, mocking *démon malin* of the *Port-Royal*. Now he is the sage: sensible, gay, serene, modest, practicing better than he preaches, wisest Frenchman ever, master of Sainte-Beuve, exponent of one of four forms of truth and moral happiness. The "three quarters" remain, but the fourth has gone.

Even in parts of the *Port-Royal* there are signs at least of a change of heart, such as this footnote near the end of the portrait:

Tout procès est désagréable à soutenir: celui-ci, où Port-Royal nous a engagé contre Montaigne, nous a bien coûté. Que nous eussions mieux aimé le pouvoir prendre comme lui-même il s'est offert, *de biais*, sans violence! . . . Nous suivons un peu sa méthode malgré nous, en ne craignant pas d'enregistrer cette contradiction ouverte entre notre conclusion et notre affection. (II, 442n-443n.)

The new Montaigne first appears in 1850 in Volume I of the *Lundis* (pages 241-242) when Sainte-Beuve writes of him and Commynes:

Ce sont des hommes qui ont nos idées et qui les ont dans la mesure et dans le sens où il nous serait bon de les avoir, qui entendent le monde, la société, particulièrement l'art d'y vivre et de s'y conduire, comme nous serions trop heureux de l'entendre encore aujourd'hui; des têtes saines, judicieuses, munies d'un sens fin et sûr, riches d'une expérience moins amère que profitable et consolante, et comme savoureuse. Ce sont des conseillers et des causeurs bons à écouter après trois ou quatre siècles comme au premier jour; Montaigne sur tous les sujets et à toutes les heures . . . Ce qui semble naïveté chez eux n'est qu'une grâce et une fleur de langage qui orne leur maturité, et d'où leur expérience, si consommée qu'elle soit, prend à nos yeux je ne sais quel air de nouveauté précoce, qui la rend agréable et piquante, et qui l'insinue. On se figure volontiers la sagesse en cheveux blancs et la prudence en cheveux gris; ici, elles se montrent plutôt avec un sourire, avec un parler jeune et plein de fraîcheur.

42. *Tableau de la poésie française et du théâtre français au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris, Charpentier, undated, pp. 453-454.

43. *Portraits contemporains*, Paris, Calmann Lévy, 1889-1891, 5 vols., V, 212-213, 217 (1844); *Portraits littéraires*, III, 505 (1848); *Causeries du lundi*, V, 526 (1852).

44. *Causeries du lundi*, IX, 153, 160.

We find him again in the article "Nouveaux Documents sur Montaigne" as Sainte-Beuve turns to him for comfort in the troubles of 1851:

Montaigne avait l'âme simple, naturelle, populaire, et des plus heureusement tempérées . . . La grande singularité de Montaigne, et ce qui fait de lui un phénomène, c'est d'avoir été la modération, le ménagement et le tempérament même en un tel siècle . . .

Quoique les leçons, en général, ne servent à rien, que l'art de la sagesse et surtout celui du bonheur ne s'apprennent pas, ne nous refusons pourtant point le plaisir d'écouter Montaigne, donnons-nous du moins le spectacle de cette sagesse et de ce bonheur en lui . . .

Tel qu'il est, Montaigne est notre Horace . . . Son livre est un trésor d'observations morales et d'expérience . . . on ne le peut lire quelque temps sans en avoir l'âme toute remplie et comme tapissée, ou, pour mieux dire, tout armée et toute revêtue.<sup>45</sup>

The article "Montaigne en voyage" (*Nouveaux Lundis*, II, 156-177; March 24, 1862), full of warm admiration for his constant cheerfulness and good sense, ends with the highest praise of all:

On ne perd jamais son temps à l'accoster. Aussi avons-nous vu quel charmant, quel commode et quel joli voyageur c'était que cet homme de cabinet qui avait en lui l'étoffe de plusieurs hommes; quel naturel heureux, curieux, ouvert à tout, détaché de soi et du chez-soi, déniaisé, guéri de toute sottise, purgé de toute prévention. Et quelle sérénité, quelle allégresse même, jusque dans la souffrance et dans les maux! que d'accortise à tout venant! que de bon sens partout! que de vigueur de pensée! quel sentiment de la grandeur, quand il y a lieu! que de hardiesse et aussi d'adresse en lui! J'appelle Montaigne "le Français le plus sage qui ait jamais existé." (Page 177.)

Though this praise is tempered somewhat in a third and last article<sup>46</sup> by Montaigne's failure as retiring mayor to return to plague-stricken Bordeaux, Sainte-Beuve denies him only "la sainte folie . . . la flamme et [le] dévouement," and still grants him "toutes ses qualités de bon esprit, de modération, de prudence, de philosophie et de parfaite sagesse" (page 263). In a *pensée* of his last years he describes the four forms of moral happiness and truth: Plato; Lucretius or Epicurus; St. Paul or Jesus; finally "le scepticisme qui comprend tout, qui se métamorphose tour à tour en chacun, et qui conçoit la pensée humaine comme le rêve de tout et comme créant l'objet de son rêve (Montaigne, Hume) . . ."<sup>47</sup> And in 1865 he writes: "J'ai l'âge auquel sont morts Horace, Montaigne et Bayle, mes maîtres; je puis mourir."<sup>48</sup>

Perhaps even more indicative of his change in attitude is the way Sainte-Beuve tells in 1862 of the gentle censoring of the *Essais* by the Papal

45. *Causeries du lundi*, IV, 80-82, 95-96 (April 28, 1851).

46. "Montaigne, maire de Bordeaux," *Nouveaux Lundis*, Paris, M. and C. Lévy, 1870-1883 eds., VI, 239-264 (November 9, 1863).

47. *Causeries du lundi*, XI, 515.

48. *Causeries du lundi*, Table générale et analytique, p. 45.



authorities. There is not the slightest suggestion that their kindness is naïve or that Montaigne is amused. It is inconceivable that Sainte-Beuve would have missed this chance earlier.<sup>49</sup>

Besides all this evidence that Sainte-Beuve's view of Montaigne changed after the *Port-Royal*, one note that he made, probably around 1851, on his edition of the *Essais*, suggests that he lost his conviction of Montaigne's irreligion. Though Faguet in publishing it declares part of it illegible, what remains seems almost conclusive. Beside a passage in a letter from La Boétie to Montaigne, Sainte-Beuve wrote: "*Paroles religieuses dites à Montaigne et dignes d'être pesées* (? mot peu lisible. *Opposées?*) *à ceux qui lui contestent toute religion.*"<sup>50</sup>

To conclude, the portrait of Montaigne in the *Port-Royal* is dramatic, romantic and flamboyant, but not solid. The facts that support it all depend on the notion of a treacherous *fourth quarter*, which in turn depends on an outright misrepresentation of the declared purpose and conclusion of the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond." Sainte-Beuve himself admits that it is a prosecution into which he is drawn by his attempt to espouse Port-Royal and in which he squeezes and twists Montaigne's book to prove his point. It is also a brilliant but hasty attempt to say something new and co-ordinated about an author whom he later knew well enough not to repeat it. The *démon malin*, the Montaigne of the *Port-Royal*, is not the Montaigne of Sainte-Beuve. It is absent from his later work; it seems irreconcilable with the happy sage that he admired and turned to as a master in the last twenty years of his life. It is great creative writing rather than criticism. It does not deserve all the consideration it still receives. And I believe that the maturer Sainte-Beuve knew it.

### III. OTHER EXPLANATIONS

If Sainte-Beuve's theory is weak, what is better? The usual explanations are that Montaigne either forgot or misunderstood Sebond.

Strowski considers Montaigne primarily "l'homme de Sebond" and gives a paradoxical twist to the second theory: "C'est pour être trop entré dans la pensée de Raymond Sebond que Montaigne a creusé un abîme entre l'être de Dieu et l'être de l'homme et du monde, laissant toute la certitude tomber, se perdre au fond de cet abîme."<sup>51</sup> Villey admits that Montaigne ruins Sebond, and explains that he simply forgot or did not care.<sup>52</sup> Cons offers a rather similar explanation.<sup>53</sup>

49. *Nouveaux Lundis*, II, 171-173, 176 (March 24, 1862).

50. Emile Faguet, "Montaigne annoté par Sainte-Beuve," *Revue Latine*, V (August 25, 1906), 474. The italics and the words in parentheses are Faguet's. Certain other annotations (pp. 468, 473, etc.) are interesting but less conclusive than this.

51. *Montaigne*, Paris, Alcan, 1906, pp. 81-82.

52. *Les Sources et l'évolution des Essais de Montaigne*, Paris, Hachette, 1933, 2nd ed., 2 vols., II, 172-173. Cf. Bédier and Hazard, *Histoire de la littérature française illustrée*, I, 205.

53. *Anthologie littéraire de la Renaissance française*, pp. 143-144. For an interesting

Even the later scholars who have taught us so much about the "Apologie" seem unconvincing on this point. Judging as he does that the notion of a treacherous Montaigne has been abandoned, Coppin offers little explanation; yet his chapter on the "Apologie" consists of eight pages on "Sebon défendu par Montaigne" as against sixteen on "Sebon atteint dans la lutte."<sup>54</sup> Forest likewise considers the "betrayal" no longer a problem and contents himself with showing that the "Apologie" is a real defense of Christianity.<sup>55</sup> Janssen's solution is somewhat like Strowski's, which he admires as the best: that Montaigne, himself a fideist, saw traces of fideism in Sebond and sincerely thought that he and Sebond were closer than they were:

Montaigne, assimilant par erreur la théorie de Sebond à la sienne, croit qu'on peut prouver les vérités de la religion "par des raisons *humaines et naturelles*" . . . sous cette réserve que "les moyens *purement humains*" n'en sont aucunement capables . . .<sup>56</sup>

But as Coppin showed in refuting him, Janssen's ingenious theory cannot stand up against the clear evidence that Montaigne was fully conscious of his differences from Sebond. However, Plattard, finding Villey as well as Sainte-Beuve unfair to Montaigne, sides with Janssen: "Montaigne . . . l'a mal interprété. Il ne l'a pas trahi."<sup>57</sup>

Dréano explains that Montaigne, seeing both fideism and rationalism in Sebond, defends the former but attacks the latter.<sup>58</sup> This, however, is merely to imply that the "betrayal" was inevitable.

Citoleux, who presents Montaigne as a good medieval Christian and disciple of Sebond, is satisfied that no betrayal exists. But in order to make his paradoxical case, he completely ignores the vast body of evidence that Montaigne from 1569 on well knew Sebond's weakness. He has not solved the problem, for he has not seen it.

Two sounder explanations are those of Jean Prévost, who stresses Montaigne's mixed feelings toward Sebond,<sup>59</sup> and André Lamandé, who brings out the element of polemic in the "Apologie."<sup>60</sup>

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study in the problem of Montaigne's religion see Cons' article "Montaigne et Julien l'Apostat" in *Humanisme et Renaissance*, IV (1937), 411-420.

54. Montaigne, traducteur de Raymond Sebon, pp. 141-149, 149-165. Coppin offers sound and fuller explanations in his articles "Marguerite de Valois et le Livre des Créatures de Raymond Sebon" and "Sur une interprétation nouvelle de l'Apologie de R. Sebond," *Revue du Seizième Siècle*, X (1923), 57-66; XVII (1930), 314-321; but these still suffer, in my opinion, from taking the problem a little too lightly.

55. "Montaigne humaniste et théologien," *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, XVIII (1929), 64-70.

56. *Montaigne fideïste*, p. 44; cf. p. 77.

57. *Etat présent des études sur Montaigne*, p. 58.

58. *La Pensée religieuse de Montaigne*, p. 295.

59. *La Vie de Montaigne*, Paris, N. R. F., 1928, pp. 124-129, 166-167.

60. "La Religion de Montaigne," *Le Correspondant*, CCCXXX (February-March 1933), 481-497, 703-713.

Soundest of all is Jacob Zeitlin's explanation in the notes of his translation of the *Essays* (II, 481-519). Under the heading "The Problem of the 'Apologie'" he reviews judiciously the position of Sainte-Beuve in the *Port-Royal*; the "bafflement" of such eminent scholars as Strowski, Stapfer, Villey, Grace Norton and Lanson; the affinities between Montaigne and the Paduans, shown by Blanchet and Busson; the theories of Coppin and Janssen, with their strengths and weaknesses; and the plausible view that the "Apologie" is simply non-religious.

"But," he asks, "is it certain that the title represents the writer's primary intention?" His answer is a convincing conjectural reconstruction of the composition of the "Apologie." From Montaigne's faint praise of Sebond and other internal evidence he argues an early fondness that cooled as Montaigne outgrew Sebond. From the strong resemblance of certain parts of the "Apologie" to other essays that can be fairly securely dated, he reasons that it was composed in several strata and at different times, mainly between 1573 and 1578; and thus that most of it was already written when the lady to whom it is addressed, almost certainly Marguerite de Valois, asked Montaigne in 1578 or 1579 to defend the man he had translated. Though he had come a long way from Sebond, to satisfy Marguerite he decided to try to make his material on man's vanity part of the Apology she wanted. Hence the weak defense and the long and exuberant counter-attack.

Zeitlin's analysis of the "Apologie" reconciles many of its contradictions and shows Montaigne already on his way from his fondness for Pyrrhonism toward the certainties of Book III. It includes and explains far more of what we know of Montaigne and Sebond than any other defense; it is far more reconcilable with our other knowledge of Montaigne than is Sainte-Beuve's *démon malin*. However, I believe there is more to support Zeitlin's general position than even he brings out.

#### IV. MONTAIGNE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SEBOND<sup>61</sup>

Zeitlin's approach to the problem of the "Apologie" from the facts of its composition through the point of view of its author is, I think, the soundest. The center of this point of view is Montaigne's attitude toward Sebond himself. Though Zeitlin is primarily concerned less with him than with the "Apologie," part of his theory is what he modestly calls his "surmise" that Montaigne came from "sincere admiration" when he undertook to translate Sebond to disrespect for a man he had outgrown when Marguerite asked him to defend him.

His evidence that Montaigne had such a strong early liking for Sebond is the fact that he asked Turnebus about him. Since Turnebus died in 1565

61. This part is substantially a paper of the same title presented in December 1946 before the French II section (French Literature of the XVIth Century) of the Modern Language Association.

and Montaigne's last previous stay in Paris was probably in 1561-1562, Montaigne must have been interested that early.

But it is hazardous to argue from this that Montaigne, "solicitous about the religious peace of France and about establishing his own orthodoxy with the authorities . . . must have had much the same feeling about him [Sebond] as had Pierre Bunel twenty years earlier" (page 486). When Bunel read Sebond, the book was not banned; when Montaigne presumably talked to Turnebus about it, it was. And while it is conjecture that Montaigne was more than merely interested in 1562, it is fact that when he first treats Sebond in his translation (1569) he makes changes in the Prologue that show more criticism than admiration. Clearly he is already aware of his differences, and, since he is indeed "solicitous . . . about establishing his own orthodoxy," he probably knows that Sebond's book is banned by Rome.<sup>62</sup>

A better theory, I believe, is that any change is merely of degree and not of kind. Montaigne's attitude in both the translation and the "Apologie" seems to be that Sebond is not simply weak or strong, good or bad; that he is *weak but useful*: his arguments are weak, but may be useful to the weak faith and the weak minds of men.

Four facts show his awareness of Sebond's weakness. He takes surprisingly little from Sebond. He offers almost no defense of him. The weight of the "Apologie" is against Sebond. His translation of the *Theologia naturalis* shows his long-standing disagreement with Sebond.

It is indeed surprising how little Montaigne takes from Sebond. Sebond's book is primarily theological, the "Apologie" a-theological if not anti-theological; Sebond's ideas are rarely discussed unless to refute them. In all the *Essais* Sebond is seldom mentioned; his ideas, when used, are generally changed in the using.<sup>63</sup> Montaigne's only important debt to him is the idea that the base of all knowledge is self-knowledge. This debt may often have been underrated. But considering Montaigne's great interest in religious matters, the care with which he translated Sebond, and his debt to the authors he really admires, the surprising thing is how little he owes to Sebond.

Montaigne offers almost no defense of Sebond. Of 333 pages of "Apologie" in Villey's second edition, about two are real defense (230-231), about twenty defensive (215-233); over three hundred (233-544) are pure counter-attack against Sebond's critics. The introductory remarks seem to apologize for everything connected with Sebond. Learning and learned men, Montaigne begins, are usually overrated. Now Bunel, who gave the book to Montaigne's father, is learned; Sebond is learned; Montaigne's beloved father is here said to worship learned men the more because he

62. In his copy of Bernardino Ochino's *Il Catechismo* (1561) he wrote: "Liber prohibitus" (Villey, *Les Sources et l'évolution des Essais de Montaigne*, I, 203).

63. See Coppin, *Montaigne, traducteur de Raymond Sebon*, pp. 167-188.

had no knowledge of letters. His father, it seems, came across the book "by chance, under a pile of abandoned papers," and asked him to translate it; he himself "happened to have the time," and "couldn't refuse the best father that ever was." And he suggests that he did it in a few days.

In all the "Apologie" there is almost no unqualified praise of Sebond's book. The usual theme is that it was a noble effort: "dessein plein de piété . . . fin . . . hardie et courageuse . . . digne estude" (II, xii, 215, 229). Sebond is a "tres-suffisant homme et ayant plusieurs belles parties" (216)—an obvious reservation. No one could do better "en cet argument là" (215). True, the contrary arguments are no better, but Montaigne means to prove them null and void. The defense of Sebond for supporting religion with human reasons (216–231) is indirect, to say the least: not that his reasons are good, but that most so-called religion is very bad. Elsewhere Montaigne tells us that he is prone to exaggerate in praising his friends; yet all he can say here for Sebond is that thanks to his faith, his arguments may serve as a primer for an apprentice: "Ils sont capables de servir d'acheminement et de premiere guyde à un aprentis pour le mettre à la voye de cette connoissance; ils le façonnent aucunement et rendent capable de la grace de Dieu" (230). Montaigne's total failure to espouse his author shows also when he tells how certain ladies have asked him to defend *their* book—not his—and again when he speaks to Marguerite of ways of defending *your* Sebond.<sup>64</sup> He seems constantly to be trying to say something really good about Sebond, but finding that in all *bonne foi* he cannot. His strained tone is in marked contrast with the exuberance of his attack on man's vanity.

The third fact, that the weight of the "Apologie" is against Sebond, is so widely recognized that no long discussion is necessary here.<sup>65</sup> True, the "Apologie" is in one sense a corollary of the *Theologia naturalis*: it is an attack on Sebond's opponents; where Sebond showed what human reason can do with the aid of religion, Montaigne shows what it cannot do without it. But some of Montaigne's arguments seem to apply to man with or without God. Sebond defines God by human analogies and reasons; Montaigne attacks any such attempt to define and thus limit God's powers. Sebond attempts a rational demonstration of Christianity; Montaigne insists that true belief is pure, obedient and unreasoning. Sebond's proof of God's existence rests on the analogy of man's superiority to the animals. Montaigne strongly denies that man is either above or below them, and even parodies Sebond's claim that the universe is made for man by having the same claim made by a gosling.<sup>66</sup> The differences throughout are fundamental.

The final and clearest sign that Montaigne is critical of Sebond is the fact that in his careful and otherwise faithful translation of the *Theologia*

64. II, xii, 215, 448. Cf. Zeitlin, II, 513.

65. See the discussions in Plattard, Dréano, Zeitlin and Guiton.

66. II, xii, 398–399; cf. pp. 310, 332–334, 359–361, and Sebond, *Théologie naturelle*, Paris, Gorbin, 1581 ed., pp. 98–99.

*naturalis* he makes vital modifications in the six-page Prologue.<sup>67</sup> Where Sebond called his own doctrine *necessary*, Montaigne calls it *useful*; it shows, he says, not *all* man's duties, but *almost all*; it teaches not *all* the *truth necessary to man* (about God and man), but *the truth, as far as it is possible for natural reason to do so*. Instead of *teaching man to know, infallibly and with great certainty, what is contained, prescribed and ordered in the Scriptures*, it *gives him great access to the understanding of what is prescribed and ordered in the Scriptures*. Instead of *delivering him from all doubt, enabling him to solve without difficulty any question that should be known, and making his mind consent to the Scriptures*, it *merely delivers him from several doubts and makes his mind consent boldly to the Scriptures*. It no longer reveals *all* the errors of ancients and pagans, nor leads to the knowledge of *all* the Catholic faith, nor *infallibly*, nor refutes all heresies *infallibly*. According to Sebond, *it confirms the Scriptures, and through it man firmly believes them*; according to Montaigne, *its purpose is to confirm the Scriptures, and to lay the foundations on which we can build what follows in them obscurely*. Finally it contains not *the knowledge necessary to man*, but *the knowledge necessary to man before all others*.

These changes and others in the same vein<sup>68</sup> completely alter Sebond's claims for his book, and are completely in keeping with Montaigne's reservations in the "Apologie." Furthermore, Montaigne probably knew that the book was on the Index from 1558-1559 to 1564, and the Prologue alone from then on; yet his translation was never censured at all.<sup>69</sup> This certainly argues that he was fully conscious of his differences from Sebond.

In short, the only reasonable explanation of Montaigne's infidelity to Sebond is not carelessness or misunderstanding, but the fact that he considered his arguments weak.

However, it is almost equally evident that Montaigne saw some value in Sebond, and that this value was usefulness. Twice he speaks in these terms. In the "Apologie" he says that Bunel gave his father the *Theologia naturalis* as a "livre tres-utile et propre à la saison," and adds: "En quoy

67. Coppin was the first to bring these out (*op. cit.*, pp. 67-70).

68. Comparing the Prologue in Montaigne's translation (1581 ed.) with the *Theologia naturalis* (Martin Flach, Argentine, Strasbourg, 1496 ed.), we find that "Fundamentum omnium scientiarum quae sunt homini necessariae" is changed to "les petits fondemens de la doctrine appartenante à l'homme"; "fundamentum et radicem omnis veritatis" becomes "une fontaine de verité salutaire"; "ista est prima et homini necessaria" becomes simply "elle est la première"; "haec scientia arguit per argumenta infallibilia, quibus nullus potest contradicere" becomes "Elle ne se sert d'arguments obscurs, qui aient besoin de profond et long discours"; and, as Coppin shows, "plus sciet infra mensem per istam scientiam quam per centum annos studendo doctores" becomes "il se rendra par ceste doctrine en peu de mois scauant et versé en plusieurs choses, pour lesquelles scavoir il conviendrait employer long temps à la lecture de plusieurs livres." (Translation, p. 2, recto and verso; Sebond, p. a1, recto col. 2, verso col. 1.)

69. See Coppin, pp. 65-67; Dréano, pp. 91-113.



il avoit un tresbon advis" (213). And in the Prologue he reduces Sebond's claim for his doctrine from *necessary* to *useful*.

In the *Essais* the important idea of the levels of learning and of faith shows how Montaigne could see some use even in a weak theory. Innocence, he says, can produce splendid results (II, xi, 189); we must submit wholly or not at all to the discipline of the Church (I, xxvii, 349-350); we must not judge divine ordinances freely, but accept God uncritically (I, xxxii, 415-419), and likewise the Bible, since pure ignorance is far better than the empty verbal knowledge that fosters presumption (I, lvi, 614). For knowledge is a dangerous weapon even to its possessor (I, xxv, 266); the obedience of the reasoner is not pure; the learned can be as foolish as any (II, xvii, 649, 656). Pride and curiosity are the scourges of our soul (I, xxvii, 350); the foster mother of the falsest opinions is man's conceit (II, xvii, 605).

True, there is a doctoral ignorance beyond ordinary knowledge and beyond abecedarian ignorance; and these three levels are found in faith, where the simplest minds make good Christians and great minds the best of all, while presumption and heresy breed in between (I, liv, 597-599). But how many attain this highest level? Montaigne is quick to say that he does not; and his bitter indictment in the "Apologie" of religion as it is shows how few do (217-231). The practical course would seem to be to try to keep people on the lowest level.

Now Montaigne is a practical man and a moralist. Few men value truth more highly; defending it against expediency, he calls it "la premiere et fondamentale partie de la vertu" (II, xvii, 631). But if he has to choose between truth and goodness, he chooses goodness. He takes a clear stand on the question of the useful myth: "Puis que les hommes, par leur insuffisance, ne se peuvent assez payer d'une bonne monnoye, qu'on y employe encore la fauce" (II, xvi, 594). For ends, he says, are more important than means, and human frailty often makes us use bad means for a good end.<sup>70</sup>

Montaigne's treatment of Sebond seems to show that he thought him useful as well as weak. He published the *Théologie naturelle* entire, altering the Prologue but not suppressing it as did some editors of his time.<sup>71</sup> He made and corrected his translation with great care. He republished it (1581) after the "Apologie" had appeared. He obviously enjoyed his counter-attack, and aimed it, just as he says, not at Sebond but at the Protestant and atheist critics of Sebond.

Within the "Apologie," he approves of Bunel's gift of the book to his father for support against the heresies of Luther. Prominent throughout are the ladies, whom Montaigne elsewhere calls ill qualified for theology (I, lvi, 621) and who thus might make some use of a man too weak for himself.

70. II, xxiii, 702 ("Des mauvais moyens employez à bonne fin"). Whether or not Montaigne holds to this position after 1580 (and I see no evidence to suggest that he does not), it seems clearly to be his view when he is writing the "Apologie" (see I, xxv, 267, 285, 303-306; II, xvi, 593-597; xviii, 668-670; xxxi, 763; III, i, 20-21, 24).

71. See Dréano, pp. 103-104.

Many readers of Sebond, especially ladies, have asked him to defend him; the "Apologie" is addressed to a lady and apparently written at her request; in his warning he urges her to stick to the beaten path—that of Sebond—unless pressed too hard by the "nouveaux docteurs"—who presumably can see his weakness.

For after all, Sebond does as well as anyone *en cet argument là* (215). He gives the Christian the encouragement and consolation of seeing that our feeble mortal instruments of knowledge are just as well adapted to faith as to feeble mortal subjects. His conclusion is sound: heaven, earth, the elements, our body and our soul, all things conspire to prove God: "Elles nous instruisent, si nous sommes capables d'entendre." Our human reasons are not enough, but they are something: they have "quelque corps," they are "comme la matiere lourde et sterile" to which God's grace gives shape, light, value. Sebond's arguments, strengthened as they are by faith, can start a beginner on his way to religion. Montaigne knows one man of authority, versed in letters, who confessed to him that Sebond had won him back from the errors of unbelief (229-233).

Finally, part of his defense of Sebond is virtually a defense against Montaigne himself. The first objection to the book was that Christians are wrong to seek human reasons to support their belief, which comes only from faith and divine grace. Montaigne agrees with this too well to argue against it. Instead he says it shows a certain pious zeal and we must try gently and respectfully to satisfy its proponents. Sebond's attempt, he admits, could not fully succeed: God's truth is beyond our unaided reach; our faith does not depend on us: "Si elle n'entre chez nous par une infusion extraordinaire; si elle y entre non seulement par discours, mais encore par moyens humains, elle n'y est pas en sa dignité ny en sa splendeur" (217).

But then he comes to the defense of Sebond: "Et certes je crain pourtant que nous ne la jouyssions que par cette voye"—"I fear we enjoy faith only by human means." The proof of this he offers in ten indignant pages on the religion of his contemporaries, Catholics and Protestants alike. All he finds is vacillation, wickedness, hypocrisy, self-interest and impudence. Our zeal, he says, fans our hatred, cruelty, ambition, avarice, detraction and rebellion; our religion, made to extirpate vices, covers them, fosters them, incites them:

Tout cela, c'est un signe tres-evident que nous ne recevons nostre religion qu'à nostre façon et par nos mains, et non autrement que comme les autres religions se reçoivent . . . Nous sommes Chrestiens à mesme titre que nous sommes ou Perigordins ou Alemans. (225.)

What if Sebond, he seems to ask, cannot lead to perfect faith? The Christians we see are utterly incapable of it. Their faith is not from God; they are immune to any but purely human arguments. And of these, Sebond's are as good as any:



Pour en combatre ceux qui sont precipitez aux espouvantables et horribles tenebres de l'irreligion, ils se trouveront encores lors aussi solides et autant fermes que nuls autres de mesme condition qu'on leur puisse opposer: de façon que nous serons sur les termes de dire à noz parties . . . qu'ils souffrent la force de noz preuves, ou qu'ils nous en facent voir ailleurs, et sur quelque autre sujet, de mieux tissus et mieux estofées. (230-231.)

In short, Sebond has helped people on the road to faith and can help more: perhaps not the best minds, but all the rest; and the best are few. His arguments are weak and might be useless in a better world. But in a world where ignorance rules and religion is a cloak for cruelty and hypocrisy, in Montaigne's world, Sebond can be useful.

That this attitude of Montaigne toward Sebond grew out of an early admiration is possible; that there is some change seems likely. What seems to be belief in Sebond's usefulness may be in part an attempt to defend an outworn friend. But whatever the degree of change, the evidence suggests approximately the attitude outlined above.

#### V. SEBOND AS A PRETEXT

If Montaigne's attitude toward Sebond dispels some of the mystery of the "Apologie," then only one real problem remains. Why did he call it "Apologie de Raimond Sebond"? If the text is innocent of treachery, what of the title?

It has of course been pointed out that it is rash to judge Montaigne's intentions in any essay by his title. More important, I think, is one obvious fact that has never to my knowledge been pointed out, and whose very obviousness may have been its concealment.

Fourteen years before the *Essais* a very popular French book was published. Montaigne owned it, read it, and quoted it. Its title is remarkably similar to that of Montaigne's essay. In it the man defended is a mere pretext for a critique of the religion of the author's contemporaries. This book is of course Henri Estienne's *Apologie pour Hérodote*.<sup>72</sup>

First published in 1566, by 1572 it was in its eighth edition, the one Montaigne probably used. That he owned it is not proven, but Villey thinks it almost certain. Estienne starts—and ends—by defending Herodotus against the common charge of credulity due to the wickedness and stupidity of some of the men he writes about. But the body of this "apology" is simply a bitter denunciation of the wickedness of Estienne's time and the stupidity of the previous century, a denunciation in which Herodotus is mentioned just eight times (in two volumes) and of which he is clearly not the cause but the pretext. Estienne's fiery Protestant attacks on Catholic cruelty and stupidity have little to do with Herodotus; likewise the lively stories he loves to tell. Once, carried away, he even reverses his plan—with

72. That "apologie de" and "pour" are equivalent is shown by Estienne himself (*Apologie pour Hérodote*, Paris, Liseux, 1879, 2 vols., I, 238) when he speaks of "celuy, à l'apologie duquel (c'est-à-dire pour lequel) ce traité sert de préparatif."

apologies—and tells a story from Herodotus to cap those of his own time (I, 238–243).

Estienne actually admits—or claims—a purpose, like Montaigne's later, that goes far beyond his author. He says that his first part (examples of man's wickedness) shows "notre naturelle perversité, et que c'est que de nous quand nous n'avons la crainte de Dieu pour bride"; his second, the need men have "d'estre illuminez d'enhaut" (I, 39–40). The resemblance to Montaigne's purpose in the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond" is striking.

There are many reminiscences of Estienne's book in the *Essais*. Besides many expressions, ideas and stories that could be coincidence,<sup>73</sup> there is much that clearly is not. Definitely from Estienne come the stories of the jests of condemned men; of the Savoyard who thought the King of France able enough, if he had played his cards right, to have become *maître d'hôtel* to his lord; of the soldier accused by a woman of stealing her soup, cut open by his general's orders and proven guilty; and of the impotent would-be seducer who castrated himself in vexation.<sup>74</sup>

Nothing in the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond" itself is clearly taken from Estienne. But one of its main themes is summarized in Estienne's statement that God shows us virtues in the animals "pour condamner les créatures raisonnables par les irraisonnables" (I, 143–144). They agree in their views on certain atheists, of whom Estienne writes:

Les autres, non-obstant les remors de conscience qu'il sentent, veulent contre-faire les athéistes; et au lieu que quelques athéistes confessent estre bien marris qu'ils ne peuvent croire qu'il y a un Dieu, ceux-ci au contraire se faschent de ce qu'ils ne se peuvent oster de la fantasie qu'il n'y en ait un . . . (I, 188.)

These are not unlike the affecters of atheism that Montaigne so despises, whom he calls foolish enough but not strong enough to implant it in their conscience: "Hommes bien miserables et escervellez, qui taschent d'estre pires qu'ils ne peuvent!" (II, xii, 227).

Montaigne makes only one personal reference to Estienne in the *Essais*, but the way he makes it is significant. In a discussion of women who have killed themselves to save their chastity, he writes:

Il nous sera à l'aventure honorable aux siècles advenir qu'un sçavant auteur de ce temps, et notamment Parisien, se met en peine de persuader aux Dames de nostre siècle de prendre plustost tout autre party que d'entrer en

73. "Bonne foy," "teste bien faite," "arrière-boutique," "vin theologal"; critique of venality of offices, utility of foreign travel, futility of travel if we take our homes along, trivial use some make of travel, gravity of crimes against the chastity of women, corruption of our time (no metal is base enough to represent it), vices that are now called virtues; the condoning of robbery by the Spartans, the treasure-house of Rhampsinetus and the thieves. Montaigne's travelers who go to Italy to learn "la richesse des calessons de la Signora Livia" (I, xxvi, 291) might be an embellishment on Estienne's law students in Italy who learn no laws but those that begin "*La signora Lucretia*, ou *La signora Angela*, ou *La signora Camilla*" (I, 154).

74. *Essais*, I, xiv, 87–88; xxvi, 301; II, v, 76–77; xxix, 745. *Apologie pour Hérodoté*, I, 20, 252–253, 279, 348–350.

l'horrible conseil d'un tel des-espoir. Je suis marry qu'il n'a sceu, pour mesler à ses comptes, le bon mot que j'apprens à Toulouse . . .<sup>75</sup>

This learned Protestant, then living in Geneva, Montaigne calls simply a learned author, notably Parisian: Protestantism, Geneva, Estienne's name, are not mentioned. Though Montaigne has not yet been blamed by Rome for praising the Protestant poet Beza, clearly he is not anxious to reveal how much he owes to a heretic. His strong motives for not acknowledging a debt heighten the probability that a debt exists. And it is at least possible that knowing the popularity of this Protestant attack on Catholicism, he wished to make his own "Apologie" a Catholic counterpart aimed not only at Protestants but at Stoics and atheists as well.

One thing at least is clear. Estienne did not betray Herodotus. No more does Montaigne's title prove that he betrayed Sebond. For the apology as a pretext there was good precedent, and Montaigne knew it.

#### VI. THE "APOLOGIE DE RAIMOND SEBOND" AS A COUNTER-ATTACK

If the conclusions presented thus far have not been too ambitious, Montaigne's "betrayal" of Sebond is revealed as a dramatic but unsubstantial picture, *fantosme à estonner les gens*, and his treatment of Sebond as merely forgetful unconcern (with good precedent) about a man whose weakness he had long recognized, whom he had translated only by request, whose defense is not central to his thought in most of the essay, and whose aim of serving Christianity he shared, or at the very least seems to think he shared. And if so, it seems only fair that we should consider the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond" without suspicion.

So considered, how does it appear? Montaigne tells us that he wrote it to defend the author he had translated against two groups of critics. He leads us to expect some such arrangement as this:

Introduction

First Objection and Defense

Second Objection and Defense

Conclusion

Now these parts do exist, but their proportions are astonishing. In Villey's 1930-1931 edition the Introduction fills 4 pages; First Objection and Defense, 15 pages; Second Objection and Defense, 313 pages; Conclusion, 1 page. Furthermore, the opening words and the conclusion announce and end not the defense of Sebond but the answer to the second objection. Obviously this is the important part, and what precedes is little more than introductory. A detailed plan that shows the actual emphasis and movement of the essay would be this:<sup>76</sup>

75. II, iii, 54. Cf. *Apologie pour Hérodoté*, I, 398-403.

76. Many plans of the "Apologie" exist. The weakness of most of them, in my opinion, is that they take the Warring as applying to what precedes, whereas I believe it refers to what follows and thus separates *ignoramus* from *ignorabimus*. It seems much

## PLAN OF THE "APOLOGIE DE RAIMOND SEBOND"

## KEYNOTE:

KNOWLEDGE IS USEFUL BUT OVERRATED Villey, II, 212

## INTRODUCTION:

DEFENSE OF SEBOND 212-234

1. Sebond, his book, Montaigne's interest in it 212-216
2. First Objection to Sebond: Human reason  
should not be used to prove religious truth 216-231
  - a. Defense 216-229
  - b. Conclusion 229-231
3. Second Objection to Sebond: His human rea-  
sons are not good human reasons 231-234
  - a. The Objectors 231-233
  - b. Defense 233-234

## COUNTER-ATTACK:

THE VANITY OF MAN AND HIS  
KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT GOD 234-544

1. General 234-239
2. Vanity of Man: He is no worse and no better  
than the animals 239-306
3. Vanity of Man's Knowledge: It cannot make  
him 306-334
  - a. happy 306-328
  - b. good 328-334
4. Vanity of Man's Knowledge: Man has no  
knowledge. Even the philosophers disagree  
about everything important 334-447
5. Warning to the Princess: What follows is a last  
resort 447-451
6. Vanity of Man's Knowledge: Man can have no  
knowledge 451-543
  - a. The best products of man's knowledge  
(judgments, opinions, laws, etc.) are  
unstable and ever-changing 451-510
  - b. The senses, the beginning and the end  
of man's knowledge, are deficient, de-  
ceptive, incapable of certainty 510-538

too dramatic to be as meaningless as these readers would make it. Montaigne's statements of his plan (pp. 233, 334) show precisely this division in his thought. And if we accept the identification of his addressee as Marguerite de Valois, as do most scholars, chronology favors my interpretation. However, Strowski (pp. 157-158, 189-190) is the only one who brings this out adequately. Even Janssen (*op. cit.*, inside back cover) does not seem to me to stress it enough. Villey, Lanson, Plattard and Porteau seem to miss it completely by their interpretation of the Warning.

- c. Changing man cannot know changing things 538
- d. Changing man cannot know unchanging God 538-543
- 7. Conclusion: Man is a wretched thing unless he rises above humanity. He can do so only by God's grace. 543-544

The main part of the "Apologie" is clear in outline. It begins with the passage already quoted, "Considerons donc pour cette heure l'homme seul, sans secours étranger," and concludes logically that man is a vile and abject thing unless he can raise himself above humanity, but that "C'est à nostre foy Chrestienne . . . de pretendre à cette divine et miraculeuse metamorphose." The plan in detail is equally clear. The analysis of the origin of atheism in unbridled rationalism (213-214) shows why this is the object of attack. Montaigne gives us repeated notice of his plan. For reducing man's presumption in general he announces a four-part program—which he follows:

Le moyen que je prens pour rabatre cette frenaisie et qui me semble le plus propre, c'est de froisser et fouler aux pieds l'orgueil et humaine fierté; leur faire sentir l'inanité, la vanité et deneantise de l'homme; leur arracher des points les chetives armes de leur raison; leur faire baisser la teste et mordre la terre sous l'autorité et reverance de la majesté divine. (232.)

For the attack on man's knowledge and reason he announces two aims:

Voyons donc si l'homme a en sa puissance d'autres raisons plus fortes que celles de Sebond, voire s'il est en luy d'arriver à aucune certitude par argument et par discours. (233.)

After bringing man down among the animals ("froisser et fouler aux pieds l'orgueil et humaine fierté") he restates this in inverse order:

Si me faut-il voir en fin s'il est en la puissance de l'homme de trouver ce qu'il cherche, et si cette queste qu'il y a employé depuis tant de siecles, l'a enrichy de quelque nouvelle force et de quelque verité solide. (334.)

This is not much to guide us through three hundred pages of counter-attack, and it is no wonder that only in this century have scholars clearly shown these signposts and the consistency of this part. But the fact remains that this the main part is not only clear but wholly consistent with itself and with the announced aims of the author.

One question remains: Why is this main part so important? Why is the essay less a defense than a heedless counter-attack introduced by a brief defense? The answer lies in the history of its composition.

When Montaigne was very young (probably between five and thirteen), Pierre Bunel, a Christian humanist who had been attracted and then repelled by Lutheranism, visited his friend Pierre de Montaigne and left

with him a book which Montaigne himself later agrees was very useful and well suited to the times: the *Liber creaturarum*, or *Theologia naturalis*, by the fifteenth-century Spanish theologian Raymond Sebond, an attempt to prove the truth of Christianity by the evidence of nature. How soon Montaigne read it and how well he liked it then, we do not know. We do know that he asked Adrianus Turnebus about it no later than 1565 (when Turnebus died), and probably in 1561 or 1562, the date of Montaigne's last known trip to Paris before 1565. Turnebus, he says, thought it "quelque quinte essence tirée de S. Thomas d'Aquin" (215), who alone was capable of such ideas.

There are several possible motives for Montaigne's inquiry: sheer curiosity; his father's liking for the book (assuming that his father liked it already); its presence on the Index since 1558-1559 (which is hard to reconcile with Turnebus' reply, and may have been unknown to both men then); or a real liking of his own. I see no evidence to show which motives were present and which dominant. But we do know that when Montaigne in the "Apologie" tells us about his talk with Turnebus he is not showing off his long acquaintance with Sebond; on the contrary, he is clearly dissociating himself and apparently trying merely to make Sebond's religious doctrine seem respectable. It is likely enough that he thought more of the book when he asked Turnebus about it than later when he wrote the "Apologie." This likelihood is strengthened by the tone of the Preface to his translation of Sebond, which is much less deprecating than that of the "Apologie."

The same translation, however, proves clearly that Montaigne in 1569 was no uncritical admirer of Sebond. The fidelity of his free translation proves that he understood him; yet in the Prologue he reduces his claims for the book almost beyond recognition. Gone are all the boasts that it is necessary and infallible; instead it is helpful and useful, but rather pointedly nothing more. And these reservations are just like those that permeate the "Apologie."

Now in 1564 the *Theologia naturalis* proper had been taken off the Index and only the Prologue retained. Since this was the only part that Montaigne changed, it follows almost inevitably that he knew this, and almost as inevitably that this was a factor in the change. But this need not throw us back to the notion of the *démon malin*. It is far more likely that Montaigne wanted to make his translation—and probably his belief—completely orthodox; or that he already viewed Sebond with these reservations that proved to be religiously acceptable, since his translation was never censured; or that a mixture of both these motives prompted the changes.

At all events, these strong reservations in the Prologue must make us wary of exaggerating the change in Montaigne's attitude toward Sebond. We may infer a warmer feeling earlier if we choose; we may not infer much change later.



We do not know exactly when or why the "Apologie" was composed. It is natural to assume that it was written at one time and to defend Sebond. But nothing proves this, and much suggests the opposite.

Villey feels sure that the long discussion of the Skeptics (Counter-Attack, Part 4) was written around 1576, when Montaigne had a medal struck bearing scales in balance and the motto "Que sçay-je?" He thinks that probably, because of the influence throughout of Plutarch's *Moralia* which Montaigne did not have in French until after 1572, no important part was written before then. Beyond this he merely labels it hard to date and probably made up of different strata.<sup>77</sup>

Zeitlin agrees with Villey but goes much further. From the resemblance to such chapters as "De la coustume et de ne changer aisément une loy receüe" and from Montaigne's uncritical acceptance of any weapon that comes to hand, he dates the parts on man and the animals and the uselessness of knowledge (Counter-Attack, Parts 2 and 3) between 1573 and 1575. The praise of the Skeptics and the critique of the senses, parts which are full of Sextus Empiricus (Parts 4 and 6b), he assigns to 1576. The critique of the products of man's knowledge (Part 6a), alternately full of Pyrrhonism and critical of it, he explains as probably written in 1576 and added to in 1579. The warning to the princess (Part 5) he dates in the winter of 1578-1579, when Marguerite probably asked Montaigne to write a defense of Sebond. And the "Introduction" that brings in Sebond he ascribes to 1579.

This chronology rests on a searching study of the "Apologie" and is in harmony with what we know of Villey's views. The theory of strata has not to my knowledge been disputed; and other chronologies of the strata seem less sound.<sup>78</sup>

One important factor in any theory of the composition of the "Apologie" is the identity of the lady who asked Montaigne to defend Sebond. The information he gives us about her is fragmentary. She is daily instructed in ordinary methods of argument, it seems; possessed of much authority by her greatness and even more by qualities more her own; having more than one court ("vos cours") and some following ("vostre assistance"), but likely to be faced with one of "ces nouveaux docteurs" undertaking to "faire l'ingenieux" (447-449, 451).

Since the eighteenth century if not earlier this lady has been identified as Marguerite de Valois. The grounds for this tradition are so strong that in 1922 such an authority as Jean-H. Mariéjol declared that Montaigne's remarks could apply to no one else.<sup>79</sup> Coppin confirmed this strongly in

77. In Montaigne, *Essais*, II, 208.

78. Grace Norton (pp. 26-28), Porteau (pp. xxv-xxvi), Lanson (p. 146n) and Plat-tard (*Montaigne et son temps*, Paris, Boivin, 1933, p. 188) agree that the "Apologie" was not composed all at once, but see the Warning as the end of the original essay and thus differ from Zeitlin in their chronology.

79. "Marguerite de Valois, Reine de Navarre, en Gascogne," *Revue de Paris*, Année 29 Vol. I (February 1922), 528-529.



1923 by finding a passage in Marguerite's *Mémoires* that shows her reading with great comfort in 1576 a book that could only be the *Théologie naturelle*.<sup>80</sup> In the winter of 1578-1579 Marguerite was in Bordeaux, Pau and Nérac. There were religious disputes at her courts. She had taken along as preceptor a certain Choisin whom she describes as a Huguenot who posed as a Catholic to undermine her religion. Montaigne knew her and she knew him; he dedicated essays to ladies of her court, Mmes de Gurson, de Grammont, de Duras; he was *persona grata* at the court, where Henry of Navarre had made him Gentleman of the Chamber in 1577; there is a story that Marguerite later had Pierre Charron as her preacher. Knowing Montaigne and knowing Sebond, she must have known that he had translated him; indeed she probably read him in this translation.<sup>81</sup> In every way she fits perfectly the picture Montaigne gives us. And the obvious time for her to have asked him is on this visit to Gascony in 1578-1579.

If the identification of Marguerite is correct, then the date is almost certain. If the date is certain, then it is virtually certain that much of the "Apologie" was written before Montaigne was asked to defend Sebond. And if so, it was probably written with no thought of defending Sebond.

If all these probabilities are true, the history of the composition of the "Apologie," if not simple, is at least thoroughly understandable. Montaigne, perhaps reacting against Sebond's faith in human reason, had composed around 1573-1575 the parts on man's lack of superiority to the animals and on the failure of knowledge to give virtue and happiness; then around 1576 the part on the virtues of Pyrrhonism, and perhaps also those on the impotence of the senses and the feeble achievements of human reason. Whether all these were to form one essay or separate essays we do not know. Nor do we know whether Montaigne had Sebond in mind in writing them; but it seems likely that if he did, it was mainly to show that he could do better.<sup>82</sup>

Then Marguerite asked him to write a defense of Sebond, and he was faced with a problem. He no longer admired him, but he was expected to; and he hated to disappoint the princess. His analysis of the origin of atheism in the "Apologie" shows that what we would call fideism was to him the only sure defense of religion. But he realized, partly perhaps because of

80. "Marguerite de Valois et le Livre des Créatures de Raymond Sebon," *Revue du Seizième Siècle*, X (1923), 57-66.

81. Mariéjol says flatly that she did (*loc. cit.*, p. 526), but offers no evidence for his statement. Cf. Dréano, *op. cit.*, pp. 261-262.

82. The parts composed presumably soonest after Montaigne translated Sebond conflict most sharply with Sebond's ideas. It is tempting to suppose that Montaigne had to get these differences of opinion off his chest before he could see value as well as weakness in Sebond.

Another tempting conjecture is the possible link between the early questioning of Catholic doctrines that Montaigne admits (I, xxvii, 349-350) and a possible change in his attitude toward Sebond. It could well be that Montaigne first admired Sebond, then found in actual argument that his reasons did not stand up, and so evolved his own fideist view as the only sure defense of religion.

Marguerite's example, that Sebond was potentially useful and not merely weak, and he probably hoped that he could actually defend him in his own way even while advancing his own stronger arguments for belief. After all, Sebond had tried to prove what man and his intellect could do with religion, and he himself was showing what they cannot do without it: he was criticizing reason to save faith. He had precedent in Estienne's *Apologie pour Hérodote* for a "defense" that was only a pretext. Why should he not do as Estienne had done, and satisfy the princess while using Sebond as a pretext for his attack on human knowledge and presumption? Perhaps he could fit these parts together so well that the whole thing would pass for a premeditated defense, an "Apologie de Raimond Sebond." It was worth a try.

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## MADAME DE STAËL AND HANNAH MORE ON SOCIETY

MADAME DE STAËL is widely known for her personal relations with Napoleon and other political leaders, her interpretations of literature, and her observations on European political and social institutions. Hannah More is not widely known at all; and where her name is known it is usually associated with Samuel Johnson and bluestockings of the eighteenth century or with religious and charitable movements, not with a defense of English society against the criticisms of Madame de Staël.

In conversation and in published works, the steady topics of Mme de Staël are literature, politics and society; those of Hannah More are literature, virtue and religion. If the brilliant Frenchwoman is more liberal, tolerant and urbane than her countrymen of the Napoleonic era, the exemplary Englishwoman is more narrowly religious and insularly complacent than her countrymen. In contrasting these writers, one a product of French salons, the other, of English boarding schools, we can almost anticipate what each would say about the social milieu of the other. Their only common ground is in the vigor, voluminousness and variety of their works and the extraordinary vogue which they enjoyed.

Mme de Staël's remarks on England appear in *Considérations sur les principaux événements de la Révolution française*, which appeared posthumously in 1818.<sup>1</sup> The conditions she describes exhibit striking parallels to those of recent years. Writing as a refugee in England, the only stronghold of liberty in tyrant-dominated Europe, she describes war-relief organizations and the near-bankruptcy of the British exchequer. England is forever free from the danger of internal military dictatorship, she asserts, because militarism is repugnant to her people despite their display of the arts of defense in their recent victory over autocracy on the continent. It would never occur to the Englishmen who give their lives freely for their country, she affirms, to use their energies against it.<sup>2</sup>

She has sincere praise for the *lumières* of England, that is, salutary political ideas and general instruction in science and learning widely diffused throughout all classes. Intellectual progress on the continent, she says, has been impeded by political institutions, but in England, elections, juries, government and the press have given the people a firm good sense based on justice and security found nowhere else except America, "the country which resembles" England.<sup>3</sup> To the "science of liberty itself," Mme de Staël attributes the abundance of learned institutions in England; and to demo-

1. References in this article are to the Paris edition of 1845.

2. *Op. cit.*, p. 580.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 582.

cratic political institutions and freedom of the press, she ascribes the kindred respect for religion and morality. She contrasts this sobriety in a free society with the licentiousness of the English Restoration and the reign of Louis XV of France, periods of strict censorship, to prove the highly significant principle that censorship does not foster moral purity. Thus she justifies *la liberté des journaux*, by which she means a mild form of tabloid journalism, which exposes intimate personal affairs. Although this form of journalism is sometimes represented as contrary to moral delicacy, Mme de Staël defends it as one of the most efficacious causes of the triumph of truth; she feels that one may regard the judgment of the English public as a friend who enters into the details of one's daily life in order to decide what is right according to each individual circumstance.<sup>4</sup>

The portion of Mme de Staël's discourse devoted to society is really an essay on conversation. To her, the essence of society is found in this magic word. The social order is judged as it fosters or hinders good talk.<sup>5</sup> Mme de

4. Just the opposite view of the freedom of the press had been presented by an earlier visitor, De La Coste, who gives a harrowing description of the abuses of liberty of the press and describes the printing of social scandal as "un des vices de la constitution Angloise."—*Voyage philosophique d'Angleterre, fait en 1783 et 1784*, London, 1786, II, 62. Mme de Staël's son in a lengthy discussion of English newspapers gives an objective, but on the whole approving, view of the liberty of the press. Augustus de Staël-Holstein, *Letters on England*, London, 1830, pp. 139-167.

5. Several famous predecessors of Mme de Staël in describing social traits of the English character similarly devote much attention to the subject of conversation. The first of these, Bêat de Muralt, covers much of the same ground as Mme de Staël, but has a much higher view of English conversation. He warmly praises its rational level, which comes as a product of general good sense, and admires the English traits of treating a bagatelle as a bagatelle, and of speaking with absolute frankness. "Une autre preuve de bon sens dans leur conversation, c'est le silence dont ils l'entremêlent, et je pense même qu'il ne serait pas difficile de justifier leur *how d'ye do?* réitéré de temps en temps, dont les Français se moquent et qu'ils regardent comme un manque d'esprit pour soutenir la conversation. Les Anglais se sont fort bien aperçus que quand on ne parle que pour parler, on ne manque guère de dire sottises, et que la conversation doit être un commerce de sentiments et non pas de paroles . . . Mais le fatigant verbiage de la plupart de ceux qui se moquent d'eux, et qui font les spirituels et les agréables dans la conversation, justifie la taciturnité anglaise beaucoup mieux que tout ce qu'on pourrait dire en sa faveur." *Lettres sur les Anglais et les Français* (1725), ed. Eugène Ritter, Paris, 1897, pp. 68-69. Two years later a less favorable view of *how d'ye do's* was given by César de Saussure although he also has praise for English sincerity. He reports: "Leur conversation est souvent entremêlée d'un long silence qu'ils rompent quelquefois tout d'un coup par un: 'How d'ye do?' c'est-à-dire: 'Comment vous portez-vous?' qui vous fait connaître qu'ils savent que vous êtes là, & qu'ils n'ont pas grand'chose à vous dire. Ils ne sont point prévenants & peu accueillants, surtout pour les étrangers. Ils font peu ou point de compliments, & leurs rares protestations d'amitié sont généralement sincères." *Lettres et voyages de Monsr. César de Saussure*, Lausanne, 1903, Lettre VII, 1727, p. 182. A later apologist for social silence is Rousseau, who, in *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, describes "une matinée à l'angloise," a period of silence in which one enjoys "à la fois le plaisir d'être ensemble et la douceur du recueillement. Que les délices de cet état sont connues de peu de gens! Je n'ai vu personne en France en avoir la moindre idée." (Paris, Garnier frères, [188-?], p. 474.) A contemporary philosophical traveler, however, interpreted English taciturnity in terms of general lassitude and somnolence. According to his account, the English have an infinite number of devices to avoid taxing conversation such as putting their spoons in their teacups and placing their cups on the table to indicate

Staël admits that in England one is on occasion invited to gatherings in which association with people of taste and thought may be enjoyed, but she asserts that these intellectual feasts are rare. English society is dominated by assemblies in which one rubs elbows as in the pit; women outnumber men in gatherings so large that their beauty lacks space to be seen, and there is never even a question of comeliness of mind. One needs great physical strength to traverse the throng without being suffocated, the only superior talent of any kind required.<sup>6</sup> Even this barren type of society is unavailable most of the year, Mme de Staël continues, because the rich landholders are chiefly concerned with the country, spending eight or nine months there carrying on election campaigns. The habits of society are completely disrupted; for two-thirds of the year London appears as desolate as a quarantined area. During the time spent in the country, men pass half of their day riding or hunting, and then return home, exhausted, inclined only to sleep or to drink. The French, in contrast, drawn to the country neither by taste nor by business, remain in Paris throughout the year, where one may always find agreeable conversation. In France only Paris exists, but in England all the provinces are animated because of political activities. In English society, in which everybody is interested in politics, conversation concerns serious and significant subjects; in France, the art of being amiable con-

that they desire no more tea. "Le thé pris, et le cercle étant formé, les femmes y sont à-peu-près nules, à moins qu'elles ne parlent affaires ou politique; l'imagination des hommes étant essentiellement froide, et peu exercée aux idées légères et d'agrément; leur conversation n'a communément pour objet que ce qui est d'un intérêt premier." De La Coste, *op. cit.*, I, 211. A German visitor of the same period reported that the English were aware that the sudden pauses in conversation during which they sit in silence and look at one another are peculiar to them. They call such a period "an English conversation." "An Englishman, in conversation, is far from being so lively, noisy, and insinuating as some other nations are; yet, I think his behaviour is, in the eye of reason and good sense, the most to be approved, and the most pleasing. If he talks but little, he will often say more to the purpose in ten words than others in an hundred." Fred. Aug. Wendeborn, L.L.D., *A View of England towards the Close of the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1791, I, 406. Persons of quality, he reports, are "so little domestic that they find it very disagreeable to stay at home; they hasten from one engagement to another, from company to company, and from card-table to card-table. Some French and German writers have asserted, that they are very fond of talking politics; but I have the best reason to think that this is not generally true. The news of the neighbourhood, the latest advices from the scandalous chronicle, accounts of new fashions and new plays, constitute, in most instances, the topics of their conversation." *Ibid.*, I, 436. Mme de Staël's discussion of conversation in English society should be compared with her chapter on "l'esprit de conversation" in *De l'Allemagne* in which she is somewhat less ardent in her praise of good talk.

6. A German contemporary supports Mme de Staël's observations of formal society, but is in general more drawn to the English than to the French. "Their gayest assemblies are far inferior in brilliancy to those of the French. They are more crowded and tumultuous, but they want the easy communicative graces of a Parisian circle. It would seem, that they only assemble in order to make a parade, and pass in review before each other; not to enjoy the charms of conversation. Among the two thousand persons, who frequently repair to a rout, there is perhaps not one single acquaintance formed." Christian Augustus Gottlieb Goede, *A Foreigner's Opinion of England*, Boston, 1822, trans. Thomas Horne, p. 242.

sists in never exhausting a subject and in dwelling only on those topics which interest the ladies.<sup>7</sup> Mme de Staël feels that in a free society, paradoxically, the position of women becomes less dominant. In England women never mingle prominently in the general conversation, not being encouraged to do so by their husbands. A hostess never believes herself obliged, as in France, to lead the conversation and keep it from languishing. She becomes resigned to silences, which she finds easier to endure than the trial of asserting herself to relieve them—hence feminine timidity. In a free state, where men assume their natural dignity, women feel themselves subordinated.<sup>8</sup> In an absolute monarchy, however, where nothing is rigidly established and where the conquests of graciousness, in which women have an advantage, are without limit, women have the greatest influence. In England, women cannot hope to attain this ascendancy amid popular elections, parliamentary eloquence, and the inflexibility of the law.<sup>9</sup> The remedy of female suffrage was not within the purview of Mme de Staël. In the nation with the greatest freedom of the press, she continues, state secrets are kept better than in any others. There are no mistresses in a nation of strict domestic relations, and only mistresses know secrets or reveal them. In these comments there is undoubtedly an element of archness, but Hannah More took them all with horrified seriousness.

Other English people also were probably shocked by Mme de Staël's preference of French coquetry to English diffidence. Coquetry makes society engaging, she maintains, but it is rarely found in England except among unmarried couples, where it detracts rather than adds to conversation. *Mauvaise honte* or shyness, she continues, a type of embarrassment produced by expressions of tenderness, makes the English as ill at ease among themselves as among strangers. The most frigid manners are encountered among people who would show the greatest generosity to anyone in distress. They speak only when introduced, and familiarity waits upon long acquaintance. This reserve Mme de Staël associates with the English fondness for home. In England, children after their marriage seldom remain in the home of their parents, each family group having a separate establishment. London is composed of a large number of small homes fenced in like boxes, which are seldom penetrated. Even brothers and sisters rarely dine at each other's homes without a formal invitation. Such formality is not conducive to social gaiety, Mme de Staël concludes, adding that a factor in the English taste for travel is the desire to escape national social restraint as well as the national fog.

In most countries the pleasures of society belong to the leisure class. In England, however, where everyone has a career and duties, the noblemen, like the business men of other countries, prefer physical repose and pleasures

7. *Op. cit.*, p. 594.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 594.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 595.



in which the mind relaxes, to conversation in which one must think and speak with the same care required in the most serious affairs. Furthermore, because of their passion for domestic life, Englishmen do not approve of their wives' following the French custom of recruiting a certain group of people to meet together as if in a family circle.

All of the above, Mme de Staël admits as honorable causes for the paucity of conversation. Mingled with them, however, she feels, are certain national defects, in character and institutions. Those of character include vanity, a sense of class distinction and egotism. The very rich expect to be accommodated in everything, inconvenienced in nothing. One of the most pernicious institutions is entail, which separates the interest of the elder from the younger brothers and leaves many daughters without dowries. As a result society suffers from being too much concerned with unmarried men. Riches, on the whole, work against social pleasures. To receive friends "in the country," English style, one must have a considerable fortune, for one must provide all the necessary appointments. One would never dare, as in France, to make up for a bad dinner by good company.<sup>10</sup>

Mme de Staël gives what she calls a caricature of national traits, pointing out that a caricature always contains traces of the original. The Frenchman, she says, seeks to make an effect upon society, to dazzle by any means possible, good or bad. The Englishman seeks to distinguish himself by "dédain, l'insouciance et la perfection du blasé," really a device of self-love to conceal natural mediocrity. No people are more conventional or devoted to custom than the English; yet no nation has more examples of individual eccentricity.<sup>11</sup> Nowhere is there a more striking mixture of timidity and independence. Yet, in spite of pride in eccentricity, the fear of ridicule is one of the principal causes of the frigidity of English society. Hence no one is accused of insipidity for remaining silent. In the nation most attached to the freedom of the press, where people are least embarrassed by newspaper attacks, it is social pleasantries which are feared. The scandal and irony which are encountered in society offend the delicacy of the

10. *Ibid.*, p. 597.

11. An earlier writer, Abbé Le Blanc, had pointed out that the English affectation of singularity consists in their making a merit of follies which everywhere else would make them ridiculous. They regard their variety of humors and characters as an effect of their liberty and consider it an encomium on their nation. "It is not so difficult to be singular," Abbé Le Blanc observes, "as those persuade themselves, who take pride in appearing so: they need only push their character, whatever it be, to excess, and have no regard to decency." *Letters on the English and French Nations*, London, 1747, I, 66. Abbé Le Blanc condemns the English particularly for two vices which Mme de Staël does not stress, prejudice and pride. After praising the English zeal for liberty, their love of science, their humanity and industry, he observes: "Their great fault lies in believing that they alone possess these virtues: with all those peculiar to them, some few others would effectually make them, what they think they are, the principal people of the earth." (*Ibid.*, I, 10.) If Mme de Staël had had the opportunity of reading Hannah More's remarks on French society, she would probably have ceased to overlook prejudice and pride.



women and the pride of the men. This is why the English are backward in the presence of others, why in some circles reserve and taciturnity have been carried to extremes and why *le dégoût de la vie* seems to prevail.<sup>12</sup>

Despite the above reflections on English eccentricity, Mme de Staël defends the English against the accusation, current on the continent, that they are impolite. Although their habitual independence and dislike of constraint may have contributed to this charge, she says, there exists no greater politeness, no more punctilious protection than that accorded to women by the English, in matter of danger, embarrassment or miscellaneous service.<sup>13</sup> There are other salutary, even endearing, traits of English society. Great place and social merit are not interchangeable; intimacies are based on truth, sincerity and merit. Since social success does not lead to public employment, the free movement of society is not hampered by incongruous cliques. In all ranks one finds that happy combination which characterizes England, chivalry in social relations and republican austerity in domestic life.

In France, Mme de Staël continues, there have been many talented women famous for their conversation or their letters, women such as Mme de Sévigné, Mme du Deffand and Mlle de l'Espinasse. English society, however, has no place for their type of success, and therefore no parallels are to be found. Women writers such as Miss Edgeworth, Mme d'Arblay, Mme Hannah Moore [*sic*] and Mme Inchbald are widely read, but because of their seclusion from society, which limits their influence to books, it is necessary to go to history for a "true model of English womanhood in all its perfection," the famous Lady Russel.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps Hannah More was provoked by this rather unflattering reference to herself and her sister writers to reply to Mme de Staël, or perhaps she was motivated merely by the English domestic virtues coupled with her strong Francophobia. Her avowed reply to Mme de Staël is contained in an essay entitled "French Opinions of English Society," a part of her *Moral Sketches of Prevailing Opinions and Manners, Foreign and Domestic: With Reflections on Prayer*.<sup>15</sup> To call Hannah More insular is an under-

12. Hannah More wonders whether distaste for life here means a dislike of company, or a taste for suicide.

13. In *De la littérature* (Paris, 1842 ed., p. 377) Mme de Staël observes that England is the country in the world in which women are most truly loved.

14. Mme de Staël's chapter on political conditions contains many observations and principles with a contemporary sound. She asserts that India will be given its independence when the time is ripe and that England reaps no gain from the control of India, that it is more of a costly luxury than an asset. Nevertheless she cites India along with the slave-trade, the burning of Washington and the reactionary policy at the Congress of Vienna to prove that England has liberty for itself, but seeks to deny it to the rest of the world. The last part of the chapter, taken up with the defeated French empire, is an argument that a whole people cannot be punished.

Mme de Staël refers to Hannah More as "Mme" probably because of the custom in the period of applying "Mrs." as a courtesy title to unmarried ladies of advancing age.—Mary A. Hopkins, *Hannah More and Her Circle*, New York, 1947, p. 104.

15. The preface is dated 1819. *Works of Hannah More* (New York, 1843), II, 434 ff.

statement. In the preface she refers to her purpose of condemning an "excess of continental intercourse" and warns that the reiterated passage of the Straits of Dover may produce moral changes as important as those produced in the constitution and character of Rome by Caesar's crossing the Rubicon. She professes not to be prejudiced, but spends most of her preface extolling the English constitution and religion and exhorting her countrymen not to travel abroad. She develops this theme in her first essay, "Foreign Associations," which might be subtitled, "The Fewer, the Better." She opposes both the English going to France and the French coming to England. One of the greatest evils she finds is that many English people establish permanent residences in France and that English children receive French educations. Even worse than this—many return to England bringing with them French habits and French principles. These include "the long-witnessed contempt of religion, morbid insensibility to morals, desecrated Sabbaths, [and] an abandonment to amusements the most frivolous, to pleasures, knit in one eternal dance."

Acquiring the French language is given faint praise as "the introduction to much elegant literature; to much indeed that is valuable, but to more that is pernicious." Even the economic distress of English weavers and dressmakers is attributed to French competition. In impassioned terms Hannah More asks her feminine readers to say to themselves before buying French apparel that they may be indirectly starving some unfortunate English girl and driving her "to the first sinful means that may offer of procuring a scanty, precarious, and miserable support."

She compares England to ancient Rome, which had imported from Greece "the poison of her sturdy morals, the annihilation of her masculine character," adding that "the French are to us as much more formidable than the Greeks were to Rome, as we have much more to lose." This introduction to the section "French Opinion of English Society," devoted to the remarks of Mme de Staël, undoubtedly served to keep hypersensitive English readers from developing a sense of national inferiority from the impact of foreign criticisms. Hannah More, admitting that Mme de Staël has "done, in general, noble justice to the English character," asserts that she intends "to touch on no part of her able delineation of English habits and manners, but only so far as private society and conversation are concerned." The remarks to which Hannah More takes exception are the only ones adversely critical.

The first allusion to Mme de Staël's discovery that English ladies were "deplorably deficient in those shining talents and airy graces which embellish society" is made in a tone of banter. Had her visit to London been three or four years later, Hannah More suggests, she might have discovered some improvement due to English opportunities of intercourse with the society of Paris, "the charms of which she never fails to exhibit in those

glowing colours which she so well knows how to lay on, even on the worst ground."

After alluding to her author as an "eloquent panegyrist of animated conversation," Hannah More accuses her of mistaking the causes of "the heaviness of London parties," pretending to be surprised by the allegation that English gentlemen annually spend nine months on their country estates. She suggests that Bath, Tunbridge or Brighton fill in the hiatus between London and the country and that fashionable lady exiles may there find a circle of social delights "never ending, still beginning." Even if this retreat to the country were an established custom, she continues, it would not have the dismal effect of disqualifying the absentees for the charms of society, for solitude would offer leisure for reading as well as for indolence, sleeping and drinking, activities which Mme de Staël indiscriminately ascribes to most country dwellers. Leisure would nourish rather than starve the intellect and furnish it with new energy and enriched resources. Furthermore, those who in the country emulate Addison's Tory fox-hunters would not show any greater intellectual talents if they never left the metropolis.

So much for Mme de Staël's analysis of the causes of conversational sterility in London society. Hannah More's alternative explanation is ingenious and simple, amounting to this: the English do not exhibit brilliant conversational talents because they are kept from doing so by their modesty and learning! They do have ample materials for conversation, resources which may be seen in the pulpit, the senate, or at the bar, but they do not produce them indiscriminately for all comers. "They are not perhaps driven, like some of their more volatile neighbours, to talk for the sake of talking." They consider conversation rather the refreshment than the pabulum of life, and because of their "professional and laborious duties abroad," they prefer to repose their minds in society rather than to exercise them.

In discussing the fair sex, Hannah More interprets Mme de Staël's criticism of their silence in society as actually a point in their favor. "Our only fear on this subject," she writes, "is, lest they should not always remain what the writer in question represents them as being at present." In a rather tart comment for a lady of her Christian virtues, she observes that if taciturnity had prevailed in London parties during Mme de Staël's visit, it would have diminished "the number of this lady's delighted auditors" and would have lessened their gratification in "the exhibition of her superlative talents."

After linking the platitude that the number of talkers would be diminished if none opened their mouths except those who have something to say with the observation that sounder causes exist for silence than "deficiency of talent, or lack of information," Hannah More objects to the causes of feminine reserve listed by Mme de Staël. These comprise fear of ridicule, dread of newspaper scandal, and lack of political interest. Hannah More,

implying that these qualities belong to persons actively engaged in political activities, asserts that English women of fashion are educated instead for home and domestic pursuits. In a single stroke, confidently overturning her rival's reasoning and condoning the "reserve and insipidity of the English ladies," she asserts that a man of sense desires in a wife qualities of good taste, general information and correct judgment, but does not want a talking competitor. A professed female wit will soon tire of her husband, and he will find other talents lacking in her, "qualities which will eclipse wit, and outlive beauty." Dear to Hannah More is the necessity of developing the solid virtues, even at the price of fostering reserve and delicacy, "these minor evils which are considered as so cruelly detracting from the fascinations of polished society." By quoting Lord Chesterfield's and St. Paul's definitions of politeness as introductory to a long delineation of the qualities of Christian intercourse, she builds up a contrast between a noble and virtuous society and one shallow and worldly, implying that the contrast is exemplified in the English and French.

Hannah More's second essay, "English Opinion of French Society," is on the surface an independent literary effort, but actually it is a continuation of the rebuttal of Mme de Staël. Her main targets are the salon and witty conversation, in the latter of which it had been implied she was herself deficient and without power. Thus all the rancor she can openly allow herself is turned loose. She disparagingly refers to the salon of Mlle de l'Espinasse as a "talking house" and describes the society drawn around the wicked Du Deffand by "mutual fondness for conversation" as attracted by "not so much a taste, as a raging appetite." It is a "cheerless, heartless society, where persons of talents and breeding meet, not so much to enjoy each other, as to get rid of themselves." Hannah More ends this essay as she had the preceding one with a contrast between the wicked French and the virtuous English, presenting short character sketches of six exemplary Englishwomen, including Lady Russel, the comments on whom are parallel with Mme de Staël's. These virtuous women, models of sobriety, benevolence and religious attainments, are obviously designed as a foil "to all the Du Deffands, the De l'Espinasses, the D'Epinays, to all the beau ideal of the fancy, and all the practical pollutions of the life, of the *'bonnes sociétés'* of the metropolis of France." Thus a typical spokesman of missionary society reacts to the eighteenth-century version of café society.<sup>16</sup>

16. A more moderate view is given by Francis Jeffrey. He reports that Mme de Staël is not as well pleased with English manners in society as with the English constitution, but that she ascribes social deficiencies to the most humble causes. He attributes her comments, however, to "ingenious theory" rather than "correct observation," hinting that she was not particularly well qualified to discover the "true tone and character of English society from her own observation; both because she was not likely to see it in those smaller and more familiar assemblages in which it is seen to the most advantage, and because her presence must have had the unlucky effect of imposing silence on the modest, and tempting the vain and ambitious to unnatural display and ostentation." *Contributions to the Edinburgh Review by Francis Jeffrey*, Boston, 1856, p. 233.

If any conclusion is to be drawn from a reading of these studies of social intercourse, it is that the qualities demanded in each should be regarded as mutually supplemental rather than antithetical, although the personalities of the two authors seem irreconcilable. Both show the need of understanding between nations, an understanding based particularly on travel and literary correspondence. Paradoxically, Hannah More's work which reveals the urgency of intimate Anglo-French association is a diatribe against it. Hannah More, enjoying the liberties of the freest nation in Europe, condemned the French people for seeking freedom for themselves. Mme de Staël, exiled from her native land because of the French Revolution, pleaded for it and urged sympathy with the freedoms it represented. Each reader must decide for himself how typical each of these women is of her nation. No matter how closely or loosely they are identified with national character, they illustrate the necessity of an informed, an intelligent and, particularly, a tolerant approach toward neighboring nations.

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# A PREFIGURATION OF THE "DÉFILÉ DE LA HACHE" EPISODE IN FLAUBERT'S *SALAMMBÔ*: HIS JUVENILE TALE *RAGE ET IMPUISSANCE*

WHEN *'Salammbô'* was published in 1862 it encountered strong opposition. Froehner attacked the novel on archeological grounds. Those who had found *Madame Bovary* immoral and gruesome found much to criticize in a book "dont les mères ne peuvent guère permettre la lecture à leurs filles, ni même les filles à leurs mères."<sup>1</sup> One of the most severely criticized episodes is the fourteenth chapter, the "Défilé de la Hache," in which the defeat of 40,000 barbarian mercenaries at the hands of the Carthaginian general Hamilcar is described. Hamilcar's cruelty and cunning have been convincingly shown elsewhere. The barbarian hero Mâtho is absent from the gorge where 20,000 men perish through starvation, attrition, mass slaughter, and anthropophagy. In his detailed description of these horrors, Flaubert goes beyond his chief source, Polybius' *General History*, which provides him with the statement:

Il [Hamilcar] finit par établir son camp dans une position aussi fâcheuse pour les Barbares qu'elle lui était avantageuse, et les réduisit à un état si critique que, n'osant livrer bataille, incapables de fuir, cernés par ses retranchements, ils subirent une effroyable famine et en arrivèrent à se manger entre eux . . . Enfin leur ultime nourriture s'épuisa; il ne restait plus de prisonniers, plus d'esclaves, et Tunis n'envoyait toujours rien.<sup>2</sup>

In the novel, anthropophagy "is much more general than in the history."<sup>3</sup> Professor P. B. Fay comes to the conclusion that "Flaubert so alters the circumstances as to make the narrative more vivid in its horror and thus, from a certain point of view, more artistic."<sup>4</sup> The point of view is that of a Romantic or a Naturalist. It is small wonder that Zola called the "Défilé de la Hache" "un des morceaux les plus merveilleux du livre."<sup>5</sup> Yet this scene which, in its meticulously accurate detail, foreshadows aims and methods of the Naturalist school, is Romantic in its inspiration. It goes back to the interest in the macabre, a preoccupation which Flaubert had fully shared during his youth.

At the age of fifteen, in December 1836, he wrote a gruesome tale, *Rage*

1. Hippolyte Lucas, "Salammbô," *Revue Bibliographique*, Dec. 20, 1862, reprinted in *Annales Romantiques*, 1912, p. 211. See also Saint-René Taillandier, "Le Réalisme épique dans le roman," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Feb. 15, 1863.

2. Polybius, *General History*, Bk. 1, chaps. 84-85, translation in *Salammbô*, ed. Conard, Paris, 1910, pp. 441-442.

3. P. B. Fay, *Salammbô and Polybius*, in *Elliott Monographs*, Baltimore, Paris, 1914, II, 33.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

5. Zola, *Les Romanciers naturalistes*, ed. Bernouard, Paris, 1928, p. 128.



et *Impuissance*. The plot of this little known story, centered around death by attrition and burial alive, is simple. Dr. Ohmlin, the physician of an Alpine village, takes an overdose of sleeping-pills, cannot be awakened in the morning and, examined cursorily and assumed to be dead, is buried. He wakes up in the tomb. Desperate attempts to free himself only hasten his end. He dies after having suffered tortures of despair and false hopes. The barking of his dog draws a gravedigger's attention to the tomb. In the hopes of finding a treasure, he uncovers the ravaged corpse. The motive of cannibalism is represented by one short sentence: "Il avait des cheveux dans la main gauche, il s'était dévoré l'avant-bras."<sup>6</sup>

Except for this indication, the juvenile tale of horror seems to bear hardly any resemblance to the scene of the "Défilé" which is built on a much larger scale in time, numbers, and space. For twenty days, 40,000 mercenaries, trapped in an ax-shaped gorge, can get neither reinforcements nor provisions. At first, they live on provisions which they have brought along. Then famine breaks out. After nine days, three men die of exhaustion. Their corpses are eaten by the Garamantes, a despised, barbarian tribe of Lybians. Later, captive Carthaginians, slaves, sick and dying mercenaries are slaughtered. In their famished, demented condition, the surviving mercenaries become increasingly indifferent; their victims are sometimes still semi-conscious. On the nineteenth day, the army is reduced to half its size. Hamilcar then sends an emissary, takes hostages, opens an avenue of escape, and destroys the remaining mercenaries in open battle.

Before we trace the essential similarities between the two episodes, certain disparities will have to be mentioned. Thoroughly Romantic in subject-matter,<sup>7</sup> *Rage et Impuissance* forms a self-contained whole, complete with subtitles, epigraph, and didactic epilogue. The hero's feelings and sensations are suggested rather than described. Although the author attempts at times to give clinical details, these are of so general a nature that no definite impression is produced. The continuity of the narrative is broken by numerous exclamations and remarks addressed to the reader, who is Flaubert himself. Transitions, built in many cases on platitudinous statements, are unskilful: "Il rêvait l'amour dans une tombe! Mais le rêve s'efface et la tombe reste."<sup>8</sup> Such weaknesses show the young author's inability to amalgamate various themes: the loyal servant, the faithful dog, shifts between dreams and reality, death by attrition. In his later works, Flaubert uses these themes separately.

The "Défilé de la Hache" reflects the insight and technique of a mature writer. The episode is subordinated to the main plot of the novel. Clinical

6. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, ed. Conard, Paris, 1910, I, 160.

7. L. P. Shanks, *Flaubert's Youth*, Baltimore, 1927, p. 22: "... a tale of this type is related as a nightmare in Gautier's *Les jeunes-France* (1833) which parodies in many of its stories the "ferocious school", so popular then that even Balzac sacrificed to it in writing "for the ladies" his horrific *Élixir de longue vie*."

8. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 154.



details, such as the changes in a human organism subject to hunger and thirst, are carefully observed. The duration of each phase is noted and indications of the number of days between successive phases serve as transitions. At the same time, they tend to overshadow the fictional character of the episode, an impression which is strengthened by the author's rigid impassivity. He never intervenes personally in this medical report on death by starvation and violence. In *Salammô*, descriptions and psychological observations are rigorously subordinated to the central theme of horror and defeat.

*Rage et Impuissance* and the "Défilé de la Hache" differ philosophically. Flaubert uses the earlier tale to work out metaphysical problems: Does God exist? Can God be good if he permits such horrors? The mature writer suppresses such questions; he treats the metaphysical suffering of his heroes as a phase of their physical tortures. The Greek Spendius does not philosophize. Only the Barbarians, performing rites of magic, try to exorcize the evil spell. The change from belief to unbelief which fills a quarter of *Rage et Impuissance* is dealt with in one short paragraph in *Salammô*.<sup>9</sup>

On the whole, terror in the early tale is predominantly mental; the horrors of the "Défilé de la Hache" are primarily physical. Although Flaubert, as the son of a surgeon, tried from the outset to utilize his medical observations, he used them only incidentally in *Rage et Impuissance*. Twenty-five years later, he accumulated medical data to elaborate Polybius' account. He asked the Goncecourt brothers for a medical journal to study the diary of a starving man.<sup>10</sup> He perused Savigny's and Corréard's descriptions of starvation and cannibalism on board the raft of the "Méduse."<sup>11</sup>

Yet, greatly though the two works may differ, the similarities between them are considerable and essential. The differences are due to chronology, the similarities to Flaubert's personality. Both works show the same structural elements, the same philosophy of life, the same dramatic and psychological development, and one very important image.

Flaubert's readers know his habit of establishing a structural connection between the external atmosphere and his heroes' state of mind. The author of *Rage et Impuissance* already uses this device:

9. Yet Flaubert's reaction to the account of the "Méduse" disaster (see below, n. 11) shows to what extent the central problem of *Rage et Impuissance* is implicit in the horror-scenes of the "Défilé": "Rien n'est plus dramatique, atroce, effrayant. Quel est le sens providentiel de toutes ces tortures?" Flaubert, *Correspondance*, ed. Conard, Paris, 1926, IV, 457; Oct. 21, 1861.

10. See R. Descharmes, and R. Dumesnil, *Autour de Flaubert*, I (1912), 107-111. The account had appeared in C. W. Hufeland's *Journal der praktischen Arzneykunde und Wundarzneykunst*, Berlin, 1819, XLVIII, 95 ff.; the French translation in *Bibliothèque Médicale ou Recueil périodique d'extraits des meilleurs ouvrages de médecine et de chirurgie*, Paris, 1820, LXVII, 82-92.

11. Flaubert, *Correspondance*, IV, 457; Oct. 21, 1861. Descharmes (*op. cit.*, pp. 113-118) discusses this documentation.

C'était un de ces jours d'hiver tristes et pluvieux, une pluie fine battait dans l'air, et des flocons de neige blanchissaient les rues du village. Ce jour-là il était triste aussi, le village! son père, son bienfaiteur était mort!<sup>12</sup>

La nuit arriva bientôt, belle et blanche de sa lune, dont la lueur mélancolique s'abattait sur les tombes comme le doute sur le mourant.<sup>13</sup>

The author of *Salammbô* goes beyond establishing such correspondences between inner and outer atmosphere. In the novel, changes of weather, still important, serve a purpose; they affect the heroes' physical existence and thus bear directly on the action:

Un brouillard lourd et tiède, comme il en arrive dans ces régions à la fin d'hiver, le quatorzième jour s'abattit sur l'armée. Ce changement de température amena des morts nombreuses . . .<sup>14</sup>

Deux jours après, le temps redevint pur et la faim les reprit.<sup>15</sup>

Both works reflect their author's determinism. The course of events and the heroes' fate are determined by external circumstances. The blind instinct of self-preservation keeps men fighting against overwhelming odds. Morally and intellectually, they are not responsible for the catastrophe which befalls them. In this sense, the physician who, in his fatigue, has drugged himself is as innocent as the soldiers who have taken service with an unscrupulous, cruel, and materially superior people. Accordingly, conflict arises, not within the hero's personality, but between him and the world around him.

Flaubert's deterministic outlook on life is reflected in his heroes' fatalistic attitude. Dr. Ohmlin of *Rage et Impuissance* "se sentait . . . impitoyablement érasé sous celles [the hands] de la fatalité."<sup>16</sup> The mercenaries do not even trouble to analyze and discuss their situation and beliefs, but their blind resignation, their pathetic and aimless waiting for the end are wholly fatalistic.

The patterns of psychological development in the two works show astonishingly few variations. One wonders whether, in 1836, Flaubert had heard the disaster of the "Méduse" discussed<sup>17</sup> from a medical point of view and remembered it so well that subsequent documentation could only confirm his first impression.

After the author has described the trap where the heroes are caught and held, the development takes the following course: I. Stupefaction. II. Physical distress and rage. III. Thoughts of God. IV. Doubt, blasphemy, revolt

12. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 152.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 153.

14. Flaubert, *Salammbô*, p. 364.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 365.

16. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 155. On the role of fatalism in Flaubert's works, see A. Thibaudet, *Gustave Flaubert, sa vie, ses romans, son style*, Paris, 1922, p. 99.

17. The shipwreck of the "Méduse" occurred in 1816. Out of 149 people on board a raft only 15 were picked up after twelve days adrift. The others had been drowned or devoured. A trial of the ship's captain brought these facts to light and made the shipwreck notorious.

against God. V. Struggle for survival. (In *Rage et Impuissance*: Effort of the hero to free himself. In the "Défilé de la Hache": Conservation of energy, resignation, physical weakness.) VI. Hallucinations leading to madness. VII. The end.

These phases vary in relative length. III and IV are more fully treated in *Rage et Impuissance* than in *Salammbô*. On the other hand, VI is developed in greater detail in the later work. The different contents of V may be explained by the fact that in his youth Flaubert imagined a revolt, whereas the mature writer knew that a revolt at that stage was physically impossible. In the tale, anthropophagy occurs shortly before the end; in the novel, between II and III. On comparing the corresponding passages of the two episodes, we shall see, however, that, on the whole, the sequence of the earlier work foreshadows the one of the "Défilé."

### I. Stupefaction

Pourtant sa première terreur fut muette et calme, c'était un étonnement étrange et stupide, une stupeur d'idiot . . .<sup>18</sup>

Tous se regardèrent sans parler.<sup>19</sup>

### II. Physical distress and rage

Il avait froid, il se sentait nu, et l'humidité du sépulcre humectait sa peau; il tremblait, ses dents claquaient, la fièvre battait dans ses artères . . . Il pleurait de rage, il s'arrachait les cheveux . . . Que de coups de colère dont il frappa son cercueil!<sup>20</sup>

Ils s'affaîssèrent sur eux-mêmes, en se sentant un froid de glace dans les reins, et aux paupières une pesanteur accablante . . . Ils revinrent sur la herse; elle était garnie de longs clous . . . Mais tant de rage les animait qu'ils se précipitèrent contre elle.<sup>21</sup>

### III. Thoughts of God

Enfin il s'arrêta dans son désespoir, s'étendit sur sa planche, ferma les yeux et pensa à Dieu . . . Il joignit les mains et pria Dieu.<sup>22</sup>

Au commencement, ils avaient fait des prières, des vœux, pratiqué toutes sortes d'incantations.<sup>23</sup>

### IV. Doubt, blasphemy, revolt against God

D'abord il douta de Dieu, puis il le nia, puis il en rit, puis il insulta ce mot . . . "Viens! viens! que je te broie, que je t'écrase entre ma tombe et moi, que je mange ta chair! Fais-toi quelque chose de palpable pour que je puisse te déchirer en riant."<sup>24</sup>

A présent ils ne sentaient pour leurs divinités que de la haine, et, par vengeance, tâchaient de ne plus y croire.<sup>25</sup>

18. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 155.

19. Flaubert, *Salammbô*, p. 360.

20. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 155.

21. Flaubert, *Salammbô*, p. 360.

22. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 156.

23. Flaubert, *Salammbô*, p. 365.

24. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 157.

25. Flaubert, *Salammbô*, p. 366.

## V. Struggle for survival

*In Rage et Impuissance*: Effort of the hero to free himself.

Enfin, par un dernier effort de rage et de désespoir, il la brisa [the plank of the coffin].<sup>26</sup>

*In Salammbô*: Resignation, physical weakness.

Ils . . . se rattachaient à l'existence par un effort de volonté qui la prolongeait . . . enveloppés dans leurs manteaux, ils s'abandonnaient silencieusement à leur tristesse.<sup>27</sup>

## VI. Hallucinations leading to madness

Le désespoir rend fou.<sup>28</sup>

Des hallucinations les envahissaient tout à coup; ils cherchaient dans la montagne une porte pour s'enfuir et voulaient passer au travers. D'autres . . . commandaient la manœuvre d'un navire . . . Il y en avait qui se figuraient être à un festin, et ils chantaient. Beaucoup, par une étrange manie, répétaient le même mot ou faisaient continuellement le même geste . . .<sup>29</sup>

In addition to this striking similarity between the sequence of events in the two works, there is an equally striking similarity between the situation of Dr. Ohmlin and that of the mercenaries: in the early work, a man is buried alive; in *Salammbô*, the Barbarians are, as it were, enclosed in the *défilé*. The men cannot escape from a long, narrow gorge whose sidewalls are formed by inaccessible mountains. To the gravedigger of the earlier work corresponds a Carthaginian emissary who walks high above the mercenaries, apparently showing them a road to freedom. The same tragic irony prevails on both occasions. Dr. Ohmlin's frantic attempts to reach the gravedigger shake the earth and bring it down on him, thus producing suffocation. The messenger, far from helping the mercenaries, leads them into a trap and thus hastens their end.

The image of the buried men is apparent for a brief moment in the episode of the "Défilé":

Le vent soufflait du côté de la ravine. Il faisait couler le sable par-dessus la herse, en cascades, perpétuellement; et les manteaux et les chevelures des Barbares s'en recouvraient *comme si la terre, montant sur eux, avait voulu les ensevelir*. Rien ne bougeait; l'éternelle montagne, chaque matin, leur semblait encore plus haute.<sup>30</sup>

Certainly, the tomb image is not the only image mentioned or implied in the "Défilé" episode. But if Flaubert, writing in his mature style and eliminating all non-essential imagery, decided to include it in the published version, he must have considered it of some significance: the mercenaries were like men about to be buried alive. This point sheds new light on certain

26. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 159.

27. Flaubert, *Salammbô*, p. 366.

28. Flaubert, *Œuvres de jeunesse*, I, 159.

29. Flaubert, *Salammbô*, p. 367.

30. *Ibid.*, pp. 367-368 (italics mine).

weaknesses of the episode. Unquestionably, the passage is lengthy considering its relative importance, full of horrors monotonously enumerated, and rather improbable. In order to keep the mercenaries in the gorge, Flaubert had to imagine a portcullis which the Carthaginians, but not the mercenaries, can manage at will. He had to make the remaining mercenaries in their weakness succeed in climbing rocks which they had found insurmountable before. Benedetto ascribes this inconsistency to the author's wish to dwell on cannibalism.<sup>31</sup> While this is a valid motive, there may be a second and perhaps equally important one: the grave had to be closed in such a way that it could be opened by outsiders only; the dreamlike situation of rational development within an irrational framework had to be established. So Flaubert took the risk of a highly improbable situation.

Before he set himself to write *Salammbô* Flaubert stated that he wanted to "faire à travers le beau, vivant et vrai quand même." The "Défilé" scene is beautiful because its very barbarity sets off and balances descriptions of overripe civilization. That it is potentially true and alive need hardly be stressed in the face of present-day evidence from concentration camps and battlefields. Above all, it was true and alive in Flaubert's mind, for he was able to visualize horrors with extraordinary intensity.

In writing the "Défilé" scene, Flaubert professed to be motivated by his hatred of the bourgeois, the well-to-do citizen whose predilection for mediocrity made him demand from art that it entertain but not stir him. Flaubert joyously anticipated the revulsion of his bourgeois reader:

Je voulais être sorti du *Défilé de la Hache*. C'est fait! je viens d'en sortir. J'ai vingt mille hommes qui viennent de crever et de se manger réciproquement. J'ai là, je crois, des détails coquets et j'espère soulever de dégoût le cœur des honnêtes gens.<sup>32</sup>

Flaubert's hatred of the bourgeois, while perhaps objectively warranted, was also, to some extent, self-hatred. The artist admittedly lived like those whom he detested;<sup>33</sup> in matters social and economic, he frequently thought like a bourgeois. So, if he planned to shock and frighten the bourgeois mind he only had to choose and describe details which aroused his own fear and disgust.

The elements which most obviously arouse disgust in the scene of the "Défilé de la Hache" are slaughter and cannibalism. The causes of fear are less evident: a vague sense of oppression, a notion of inevitability, a picture of the human animal reduced to its lowest level. All this is made to appear

31. L. F. Benedetto, *Le Origini di 'Salammbô'*, Florence, 1920, pp. 82-84. Benedetto mentions *Rage et Impuissance* in connection with *Salammbô*, but only as regards the oriental fantasies in the early work (*op. cit.*, p. 23).

32. Flaubert, *Correspondance*, V, 4; January 2, 1862. See also IV, 454; October 1861.

33. *Ibid.*, III, 305; August 22, 1853: "Je soutiens . . . qu'il faut faire dans son existence deux parts: vivre en bourgeois et penser en demi-dieu."

— In connection with Flaubert's ambivalent attitude towards the bourgeoisie, see R. Dumesnil, "The Inevitability of Flaubert," *Horizon*, Oct. 1946, p. 216.

as an understandable necessity contingent upon the special circumstances, —and all the more repulsive and frightening.

Full accounts of violent death are part of the Romantic tradition;<sup>34</sup> the theme is developed in many of Flaubert's juvenilia, reappears in his mature works, and is of central importance in two of the *Trois Contes*, as late as 1877. Anthropophagy is an extension of the theme of violent death, resting upon the documentation of the "Méduse" disaster. The fear of burial alive, an acute form of claustrophobia,<sup>35</sup> may stem from ghost stories; it found a ready soil in Flaubert's mind. He expressed this haunting fear repeatedly. It is fully worked out in *Rage et Impuissance*, condensed into one sentence in *Novembre*,<sup>36</sup> hinted at in the image of the "Défilé" in *Salammô*, and ridiculed in *Bouvard et Pécuchet*.<sup>37</sup>

A comparison of the early tale with the "Défilé" episode shows to what extent Flaubert made even his nightmares subservient to his art. Considered in a wider context, the comparison contributes another example to the theory that the solitary of Croisset shared the changing moods of his generation. Naturalistic accuracy of detail is not only a reaction against Romantic evocation; it is also its direct consequence. Meticulous accounts of death and corruption follow quite naturally upon the vague outlines of other worldly fantasies. The wild despair of the single outcast becomes the sullen misery of an embattled group of outcasts. *Rage et Impuissance* and the "Défilé de Hache" reflect contrast and continuity both in Flaubert's work and in the literary movement of his time.

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34. Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony*, London, 1933. On Flaubert and "la passion voluptueuse du sang": pp. 152-159, 255, and *passim*.

35. Flaubert frequently compared himself with a bear. In his letters he transforms the typical asocial "ours" into an ice bear living in a cave. In *Par les champs et par les grèves*, Paris, 1886, p. 123, he says: "Nos esprits, captifs comme l'ours dans sa fosse, tournent toujours sur eux-mêmes et se heurtent contre les murs."

36. Flaubert, *Novembre*, in *Œuvres de jeunesse*, II, 256. The autobiographic hero leaves last instructions: "Il recommanda qu'on l'ouvrit, de peur d'être enterré vif."

37. Flaubert, *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, ed. Conard, 1910, pp. 105, 111. The heroes, having become interested in paleontology, attempt an excavation. A rock almost falls on them. A little later, they imagine a cataclysm swallowing up Etretat (and themselves), the whole of Normandy, finally Europe. Pécuchet who imagines a rock leaning toward him tries to appease the elements by asking them personally to stop.

## REVIEWS

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*An Anglo-Norman Rhymed Apocalypse with Commentary.* Edited by Olwen Rhys, M.A., with a Historical Introduction by Sir John Fox. (Anglo-Norman Texts: VI) Oxford, Published for the Anglo-Norman Text Society by Basil Blackwell, 1946. Pp. xlix + 164.

In the years 1900 and 1901 appeared the two volumes of a substantial publication devoted by the Société des Anciens Textes Français to *L'Apocalypse en français au treizième siècle*. The first volume, a folio, is a photographic reproduction of MS 403 of the *fonds français*, Bibliothèque Nationale, remarkable for its illustrations, the ninety-odd Figures of the Apocalypse. The second volume, in the ordinary format of the Société des Anciens Textes Français, contains a study of the Figures by Léopold Delisle, and Paul Meyer's study and edition of the text, which is a prose version with commentary.

P. Meyer showed that there was not just one Old French Apocalypse in prose, as Samuel Berger had believed,<sup>1</sup> but eight, four with commentaries and four without. Of these eight prose versions, only two survive in any considerable number of manuscripts. A non-glossed version, designated by P. Meyer as C, is found in 36 manuscripts, and the *version glosée*, of which MS 403 is a specimen, in 28.

The Anglo-Norman text now published by Mr. Rhys, from a manuscript formerly in the possession of the late Sir John Fox, is the *version glosée* put into rhymed form. Accordingly, much that is said about it, particularly in the historical introduction by Fox, is first of all applicable to the prose original, and it is necessary to note at the outset P. Meyer's explanation of what his edition of the *version glosée* was, and what it was not.

Il doit être tout d'abord bien entendu que l'édition typographique de la version n'est ici que l'accessoire. Elle a pour but de fournir une aide constante à ceux qui ont sous les yeux la reproduction photographique. Elle doit être conçue de telle façon que le lecteur puisse se reporter facilement du texte imprimé au manuscrit, et réciproquement. Par conséquent, cette édition n'est pas et ne doit pas être une édition critique. Si j'avais eu à dresser un texte critique j'aurais dû chercher à rétablir, par la comparaison des nombreuses copies de l'Apocalypse française, préalablement classées, la leçon originale, plus ou moins altérée dans toutes ces copies. J'aurais sans doute fait grand usage du ms. 403, qui, par une heureuse fortune, se trouve être l'un des plus corrects, mais je n'en aurais pas fait la base unique de mon texte. Une telle édition ne répondrait pas à l'objet de la présente publication. J'ajoute que les loisirs dont je dispose ne m'auraient pas permis de l'entreprendre. Le nombre des manuscrits de l'Apocalypse française que je connais est tel et leur dispersion

1. *La Bible française au moyen âge*, Paris, 1884, p. 99.



est si grande que je serais difficilement parvenu à m'en procurer des copies ou des collations exactes, et à trouver le temps de mettre en œuvre ces matériaux. Il est permis de dire aussi que cette version et le commentaire qui l'accompagne, bien que non dénués d'intérêt, n'ont cependant pas assez de valeur pour mériter le travail minutieux et compliqué qu'exigerait une édition critique. Dans l'état actuel des études sur l'ancienne littérature française, alors que tant d'œuvres considérables sont encore inédites ou n'ont été présentées au public que dans des éditions défectueuses, les éditeurs d'anciens textes doivent mesurer leurs efforts à l'importance du but à atteindre.<sup>1</sup>

The plan adopted was to give the text of MS 403, with the variants of B.N. fr. 9574 and Arsenal 5214. In addition, a passage of some fifty lines is quoted from each of the other manuscripts, *à toutes fins utiles*. In short, a critical edition of the *version glosée* does not exist, and the comparison of the Anglo-Norman rhymed text with that of the three manuscripts utilized by P. Meyer, none of which was its direct model, cannot lead to any definitive conclusions. For example, Sir John Fox found six passages in his text for which there is no equivalent in P. Meyer's edition. Most of these are very short, but one is of thirty-seven lines, apparently deriving from the commentary of Bishop Haymo of Halberstadt (or of Auxerre). The question is whether this passage was in the model of the rhymed version, or whether the latter's author, one Willame Giffard, designated as *Chapelain del Iglise seint Edward* (Shaftesbury Abbey), inserted it himself from another source, thereby displaying originality and erudition elsewhere not in evidence. Fox did not find the passage, he tells us, in any of the manuscripts of the *version glosée* accessible to him. There are fifteen of these in England. But what of the thirteen others in France and Belgium? Three of these were utilized by P. Meyer, leaving ten which Sir John, because of the war, was unable to consult. If the passage in question should, by chance, appear in one of them, the matter of Giffard's one apparent burst of independence and originality would appear in quite a different light. This is an example of how the lack of a critical text of the *version glosée* handicaps any close study of the Giffard composition.

Its general relationship to the *version glosée*, as well as its literary quality, may be illustrated by two short passages chosen quite at random. In each case the prose of MS 403 will be given, from P. Meyer's edition, followed by the corresponding passage from Giffard:

*Version glosée* (page 16): Ceo qu'il esta al us et bat signefie ke la grace  
Deu est preste por entrer au pecheor, et le semunt par predicatiun et  
tribulatiun. Par overir la porte [est] signefié confessiun, et Nostre Sire fet  
sa cene ove lui, quant il prent a gré ses eovres.

Giffard (page 18): *Coe ke il esta al us et bat et se apreste  
Signefie la grace Deu ke est preste  
Pur entrer en quer al pecheur*

2. Delisle-Meyer, *op. cit.*, pp. ccii-cciii.

*E le sumunst par predicaciun e labur;  
 Par overir la porte [est] signefiee  
 Confessiun par quei l'alme est mundefiee;  
 E nostre Sire ove lui fet sa ceine  
 Quant il prent a gré la vie ke il meïne.*

*Version glosée* (page 17): Ceo qu'il veet le siege mis en ciel signefie qu'il met sun penser au celestes eovres. Par le siege sunt signefié li seint en qui Deu [se] repose. Par les colurs de .ij. pierres sunt signefié les .ij. natures en Jesu Crist, le deité et la humanité . . .

Giffard (page 19): *Çoe ki il veit un sege mis  
 Signefie, çoe me est vis,  
 Ke il met sun quer al jugement, ●  
 Car le sege signefie li seint  
 En ki Deu se repose, e par les colurs  
 Des deus peres, si cum dient plusurs,  
 Deus natures de Jesu Crist sunt signefiez,  
 Sa deité par l'une et par l'autre sa humanitez.*

These specimens will make it clear why the present review will not concern itself further with Giffard's text in itself, beyond saying that Mr. Rhys has edited it with care and diligence. But before going on to matters of date, authorship, sources, and contemporary allusions, which are taken up in Sir John Fox's introduction, we should pause to note that the Giffard rhymed version is quite distinct from another Anglo-Norman rhymed Apocalypse, existing in several manuscripts, and provisionally edited by P. Meyer in 1896.<sup>3</sup> Of the seven manuscripts known to P. Meyer, three have taken over and inserted, article by article, the prose commentary of the *version glosée* (Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 20; London, British Museum, Add. 18633; Toulouse, Bibliothèque Municipale, 815). The question arises, is this rhymed version, like Giffard's, based on the prose of the *version glosée*? Fox states (page x) that this appears to be the fact. I would incline, at first glance, to doubt this. One of the particularities of the *version glosée* is the rendering as *le fiz de la Virge* of the Biblical *filio hominis*.<sup>4</sup> Only one of the 28 manuscripts (Arsenal 5091) rejects this reading and replaces it, both in text and commentary on this passage, by *filz de l'omme*.<sup>5</sup> Now the three manuscripts from which P. Meyer edited the rhymed version all have *le fiz Deu*,<sup>6</sup> but in the case of Add. 18633, the only one I have been able to verify, the prose gloss used has, for this passage, *le fiz de la Virgine*,<sup>7</sup> which would in all probability have appeared in the rhymed text as well, were it based on a manuscript of the *version glosée*.

Before leaving the rhymed Anglo-Norman version published by P.

3. "Version anglo-normande en vers de l'Apocalypse," *R*, XXV, 174-257.

4. See Delisle-Meyer, *op. cit.*, pp. cccii-ccciii.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. cclxxxviii-cclxxxix.

6. *R*, XXV, 201.

7. Delisle-Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. cclxxxi.

Meyer, we might pause to note his caustic opinion of it. The article begins (page 174): "La version rimée de l'Apocalypse, qui est publiée pour la première fois dans les pages qui suivent, peut passer pour à peu près inconnue. C'est du reste son principal mérite." Further on, he continues (page 253): "Il serait difficile assurément de trouver, dans toute la littérature anglo-normande, si riche en méchants écrits, un poème qui pût rivaliser avec notre Apocalypse pour l'incorrection de la langue et de la versification."

These are strictures, I hasten to add, which are not applicable to the Giffard text, except of course to its lamentable versification. Being closely modeled on the *version glosée*, Giffard's composition reflects its character and its merits, of which P. Meyer said:

La version n'est point littérale, comme sont les deux anciennes traductions du Psautier, qui étaient interlinéaires; elle n'a pas toutefois la libre allure qui fait le mérite de la version des Quatre livres des Rois: c'est l'œuvre d'un homme soigneux qui fait de louables efforts pour rendre intelligible un texte dont le véritable caractère et les tendances lui échappent complètement, comme du reste à tous les traducteurs jusqu'à une époque très voisine de nous.<sup>8</sup>

The oldest manuscript of the *version glosée*, the celebrated B.N. fr. 403, dates from the first half of the thirteenth century. L. Delisle would place its execution near the beginning,<sup>9</sup> P. Meyer nearer the middle of the century,<sup>10</sup> which is the moment to which he would ascribe the commentary itself:

J'incline à penser qu'il date d'une époque où, sous l'influence principalement des Franciscains et des Dominicains, des efforts énergiques furent faits en vue de rétablir l'unité de la foi par la lutte contre les hérétiques et par la réforme du clergé.<sup>11</sup>

Then, after a brief review of what appear to him as the novelties of this commentary, he concludes:

Ce sont là des traits qu'on relève chez les sermonnaires du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, principalement chez ceux qui appartiennent à l'ordre des frères mineurs. Il ne serait donc pas téméraire de conjecturer que notre commentaire est l'œuvre d'un franciscain.<sup>12</sup>

Fox, on the contrary, is persuaded that the author was a Dominican. Perhaps he was, but the arguments adduced appear to me quite futile. They come down to this: there are several references in the commentary to *li bon preeschur qui vont de liu en autre por preeschier la foi*; without denying that the Franciscans traveled and preached, Fox believes these references must be to the Dominicans, because preaching was their particular function,

8. *Ibid.*, p. cexi.

9. *Ibid.*, p. lx.

10. *Ibid.*, p. cexvi.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. ccxvii-ccxviii.

12. *Ibid.*, p. cexix.

and they are known as the Order of Preachers.<sup>13</sup> The fact of the matter is that both Dominicans and Franciscans wrote commentaries on the Apocalypse. In the second half of the thirteenth century we have those of Albertus Magnus, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Bonaventure, and a strong delayed reaction, particularly among the Franciscans, of the earlier commentary of Joachim of Flora, *il calabrese abate Gioacchino*. The stern and studious Dominicans were naturally attracted to the vision of St. John; at the same time: "Next after the Gospels, a favorite Scriptural book with the Franciscans was the Apocalypse of St. John, from which they drew their meditations and sermons upon heaven and hell."<sup>14</sup>

Fox devotes several pages (xxvii-xxxvii) to "the question how far the French Commentary is based on the author's conception of the circumstances of the time at which he writes." Both the method and the results of this brief enquiry seem to me most questionable. He has chosen twelve passages, which are not found in the commentary of Haymo (why Haymo?), and which "appear to relate to contemporary events." For the sources of these he looks about in thirteenth-century history before 1250.

The assumption is that since this is the period of the earliest extant manuscript, it is also the period of the commentary. This may be, but Fox wholly disregards the hypothesis that the *version gloseé* may have had a Latin original, which P. Meyer considered "infiniment probable."<sup>15</sup> And he also disregards the possibility that the commentary may have been written well before the thirteenth century. The strictures on heretics, on simony, on false prelates, and on temporal rulers could well have been written, say, at the court of Gregory VII, one of whose strong supporters, moreover, we might note in passing, has left us a commentary on the Apocalypse (Bruno of Segni).

If we accept, tentatively, the hypothesis that we are dealing with a thirteenth-century work, should we then try to see, behind the vague and general phrases of the commentary, references to specific men and circumstances? Are we to follow Fox in perceiving criticisms both of Frederick II (page xxxii), and of Innocent IV (page xxxvi), which postulates in the writer an enviable position *au-dessus de la mêlée*? And is it prudent to say, however guardedly: "It may be that under the title of Antichrist he means to indicate the Papacy" (page xxxvi)? The coolness of Innocent IV toward the Mendicant Orders, alluded to by Fox, was the affair of the last few months of his life, and the notorious bull *Etsi animarum*, which struck them with dismay, was revoked by Innocent's successor within five weeks of its promulgation on 21 November 1254.<sup>16</sup>

The question of the sources and history of this commentary flits like a

13. See pp. vi-vii, xxviii, xxx, and *passim*.

14. Father Cuthbert, *The Romanticism of St. Francis, and other Studies in the Genius of the Franciscans*, London, 1924, p. 181.

15. Delisle-Meyer, *op. cit.*, p. ccxvii.

16. Henry Bett, *Joachim of Flora*, London, 1931, pp. 75-76.

will-o'-the-wisp through Fox's pages, but nowhere does he come solidly to grips with it. Sir John died before this book was published: had he lived longer, he might have pushed farther some of the lines of enquiry which are suggested but not followed through with any thorough method in his introduction. The question seems still to stand where P. Meyer left it when he said:

Je n'ai pas l'intention de me livrer ici à des investigations, qui seraient prématurées, sur les sources du commentaire reproduit par notre glose: c'est une recherche qui devra prendre place dans une étude d'ensemble, lorsqu'on fera l'histoire des rêveries auxquelles a donné lieu l'Apocalypse, à partir du moment où le sens de ce pamphlet, à la fois politique et religieux, fut perdu, c'est-à-dire dès l'époque où paraissent les premiers commentateurs.<sup>17</sup>

A very rapid survey leads me to the conclusion that the present state of Apocalyptic studies is such that a search for the sources of the *version glosée* could no longer be qualified as premature. Substantial studies have appeared in our time, and particularly useful for orientation and guidance is Wilhelm Kamlah's *Apokalypse und Geschichtstheologie: die mittelalterliche Auslegung der Apokalypse vor Joachim von Fiore*.<sup>18</sup> What has been written on the illustration of the Apocalypse can also be useful to the student of literary history: in its elegant concision Montague R. James' *The Apocalypse in Art*<sup>19</sup> extends considerably the frontiers of L. Delisle's work, and is useful in indicating the present location of manuscripts which have moved in the last half century. That there is continued interest in the Figures of the Apocalypse at the Bibliothèque Nationale may be inferred from a remark by Mr. Emile-A. Van Moë, in *Les Plus Beaux Manuscrits français à peintures au moyen âge*.<sup>20</sup>

In short, the publication of Messrs. Rhys and Fox is a useful reminder that there is here an interesting if minor chapter in Old French literary history still to be written.

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*Six Sermons français inédits de Jean Gerson. Etude doctrinale et littéraire suivie de l'édition critique et de remarques linguistiques.* Par Louis Mourin. (Etudes de Théologie et d'Histoire de la Spiritualité, No. VIII) Paris, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin, 1946. Pp. xiii + 611.

We possess Gerson's French sermons in a coarse, heavily blurred, grossly misleading Latin translation of old endorsed and transmitted to us more than two hundred years ago by the slothful editor Ellies du Pin. In this

17. Delisle-Meyer, *op. cit.*, pp. cccix-ccxx.

18. Historische Studien herausgegeben von Dr. Emil Ebering, Number 285. Berlin, 1935.

19. London, 1931.

20. Paris, Arts et Métiers Graphiques, no. 60 (1937), p. 24.

text, not the preacher as artist alone is disfigured, but the man of action, thinker and theologian as well. We cannot reconstruct a true and complete portrait of Gerson until the authentic sermons are restored. No light retouching will do. The whole process of editing and interpreting, from start to finish, must be resumed.

That is what Dr. Louis Mourin has now resolved to accomplish—not all at once, to be sure, for there are some sixty French sermons extant in manuscript form. He begins by offering six. His plan is to proceed deliberately, to have all the French sermons edited in due time, and then to gather the accumulated mass of facts and comments into a final synthesis, a total reappraisal of Gerson the preacher in the light of his other works and in comparison with other preachers of his day. That ultimate synthesis, we may be sure, will repair the damage done by du Pin. The first volume before us reveals a thoroughly scrupulous method in operation. Painstakingly, Dr. Mourin plays many an arduous role; he turns now editor, now linguist, rhetorician, critic, or theologian, as the case requires. Like a veritable virtuoso of erudition, he gives an impressive performance. It is to be feared, however, that only rigorists who fancy scholarship of stark sobriety will applaud. Massive; heavy with notes, commentaries, enumerations, appendices; fragmented into six distinct studies, one for each sermon, and each adhering systematically, point by point, to the same plan; meticulous to the point of not leaving a thing unmentioned if only it can be inserted somewhere; stiffly technical, this treatise has the aspect of an ungainly compilation. As the author himself remarks, it is “d’une lecture difficile.”

This is unfortunate. For surely Dr. Mourin has a signal contribution to make. He leads the way in explorations that will renew Gersonian studies. Why, then, should not important first tidings of rediscovery be conveyed in a readable, inviting message? Why a dry, ponderous routine announcement, composed like an itemized account of the editor's research tactics? One could wish that, having done the strenuous spadework, he had molded and polished all his newly-unearthed material, and made it reasonably instinct with life. Gerson, especially in a first volume, required and deserved to be introduced with more style. He could also have been presented more briefly; the commentaries are strewn with needless résumés of the sermons. Finally Gerson, allegedly a “Bossuet du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle,” could have been studied with sharper insistence on artistic values. In six chapters (one for each sermon) the preacher's rhetorical technique is laboriously reviewed. In six others, on “Le Style,” Dr. Mourin draws up long lists of “images,” preceded in each case by an essay offering rather summary esthetic appraisals. The manner, here as in other commentaries, too often is heavily enumerative. For instance, one paragraph devoted to stylistic effects in the second sermon (page 113) becomes a catalogue, with line references, of “parallélismes,” “anaphores,” “anaphores doublées de parallélismes,” “asyndètes,” “polysyndètes imparfaites,” “interrogations réelles . . .



brèves . . . en cascade." That is not criticism. Nor is it felicitous, or overwhelmingly convincing to write (page 112): "On y sent aussi vibrer la sensibilité contenue de Gerson: *dubitatio* (549-550), *exclamation* d'admiration (605), regret (604), souhait (609-610)"—especially when a reading of the preacher's text fails to communicate the vibrations thus indexed. Nor is it enough simply to label a peroration or a prayer "beautiful." The articulate critic would move us; our eyes can be opened to unsuspected beauty, but stare indifferently at worn adjectives.

There are, nevertheless, many saving features. A short chapter, "Synthèse," gives of each sermon a more cogent and compact impression than the disparate commentaries. On occasion, the author throws a vivid light on the composition of a sermon. His "Conclusions générales" contain interesting remarks on Gerson's metaphors, and on his pre-humanism. The Bibliography is in itself an invaluable chapter. Above all, Dr. Mourin is a hardened, experienced investigator; indefatigable, he is also very prudent; at times, he does remind himself and the reader with unnecessary insistence not to draw premature conclusions from what is but a sampling of the sixty sermons; but, very wisely, he refuses to assume, as some might hastily do, that a knowledge of those sermons enables us to evaluate the oratory of Gerson's time; other masters of eloquence remain to be studied (page 22). With all precautionary measures and equipped with complex apparatus of research, Dr. Mourin has dug up and laid before us a store of exact information. Students of Gerson cannot but apply themselves to a reading of this work—if it is "d'une lecture difficile," profit will accrue from "la difficulté vaincue."

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*L'Influence du voyage de Montaigne sur les Essais.* Par Imbrie Buffum. Princeton, New Jersey, [Privately Printed,] 1946. Pp. viii + 153.

This is the second book to appear recently on Montaigne's trip through Germany, Switzerland and Italy. Professor Charles Dédéyan's *Essai sur le Journal de Voyage de Montaigne*, reviewed in our last number, came out earlier; but Dr. Buffum's book, now published after his return from military service, was presented still earlier (1942) as a Princeton University doctoral dissertation. Since each book was prepared without knowledge of the other, it is a pleasure to find that they complete each other admirably. Professor Dédéyan does full justice to all the many aspects of the *Journal* except, in my opinion, its importance to the *Essais*. Dr. Buffum, as his title suggests, uses the *Journal* mainly as documentation to show the influence of the trip on Montaigne and his work.

This delicate task requires imagination, knowledge of Montaigne, care in weighing and sifting large masses of material, judgment in assigning the right amount of probability or certainty to the conclusions reached, and



skill in giving the reader basis for judgment without swamping him with material. All these qualities are present in abundance in Dr. Buffum's book.

After a Preface that makes the subject clear ("le rôle du voyage dans la transformation des idées de Montaigne"), the Introduction, "Montaigne en voyage," sets the stage by examining Montaigne's principal interests as a traveler: cookery and domestic economy, ingenious machinery, productive landscape, the antiquities of Rome, churches, and above all religious theories and practices. Chapter I, "Le Rôle de l'expérience," discusses the change in Montaigne's chief source of knowledge, the emphasis on books and on reason before the trip and on experience after. Here as elsewhere Dr. Buffum does not claim too much for his particular thesis: he attributes Montaigne's growing absorption in experimental self-study not to travel itself, but to his clinical observation of his illness, which set him traveling and occupied his trip. Chapter II, "Douleur, plaisir et vertu," relates these important concepts to the illness and the trip, showing how Montaigne's enlarged experience of pain (and pleasure in respite from pain) made the stoical notion of virtue as denying or resisting pain and avoiding pleasure seem to him more and more futile and histrionic, while the practice of diversion from pain and grateful acceptance of pleasure became in his mind that of the sage, the artist in life.

Chapter III, "La Solitude et la société," argues that Montaigne's travels either taught him or reminded him that studious solitude as a source of enjoyment and experience came second with him to human society. As a traveler he was eager for new impressions; and though his mind may have been made up before 1580 to see more of people and the world (already, as Dr. Buffum recognizes, he had stressed the value of travel for education if not necessarily for enjoyment), still it is in the *Journal* that we first see him taking obvious and fresh delight in meeting and "collecting" new people and new ways. Chapter IV, "La Coutume," discusses Montaigne's two views of custom: as a tyrannical master that can blind us to the truth, and as a benevolent one that we are usually wise to obey. Though both themes run throughout the essays, the mistrust is greater in the early ones, the acceptance in the late. It was by following the customs of the places where he traveled that Montaigne learned that custom, being a product of human nature, has its reasons that reason knows nothing about, and that rightly used it can add to our happiness.

Chapter V, "Unité et diversité," is the last and most ambitious. The subject here is Montaigne's view of the individual and of man in general, in both of which he saw little but diversity before 1580 and much unity later. Until he saw some unity in man, he lacked his main purpose, that of studying mankind through himself. Dr. Buffum argues that his growing respect for custom and greater association with all types of men taught him the insight into the fundamental unity of human nature that gives the *Essais* much of their value.

The Conclusion summarizes the contribution of the trip to Montaigne's final views of the world and man, and is followed by four short and useful Appendices (MSS and editions of the *Journal*, itinerary in tabular form, companions, retinue, identity of the secretary) and a Bibliography.

The only one of Dr. Buffum's valuable conclusions that I would criticize at all is that Montaigne saw no real unity in man before the trip (page 126). He finds Montaigne's first clear conception of human unity in the addition of 1582 to the "Apologie de Raimond Sebond" (in Villey's 1922-1923 edition, II, xii, 197) that begins "Les ames des Empereurs et des savatiers sont jettées à mesme moule." But already before 1580 Montaigne had written in a rather similar vein: "l'Empereur, duquel la pompe vous esblouit en public . . . voyez le derriere le rideau, ce n'est rien qu'un homme commun . . ." (I, xlii, 333 A); and again, "Où aseons nous cette renommée que nous allons questant avec si grande peine? C'est en somme Pierre et Guillaume qui la porte, prend en garde, et à qui elle touche" (I, xlvi, 355 A). It is true that the context of the first passage stresses man's true inequalities; but behind the false inequalities of rank that Montaigne attacks he seems to imply a considerable unity in human nature. Books I and II are full of man's frailty of mind and body, his pride and inconsistency, which are a sort of unity; many of the remarks about our incapacity are clear-cut generalizations about human nature. As for the concept of unity needed for his plan to study mankind through himself, the elements at least are present before 1580 in "De la praesumption," where he proclaims that the subject of his study is man (II, xvii, 413 A) and stresses in this his first full-length self-portrait his human foibles, which make him a fair specimen of the race to study, and his common sense, judgment and experience of himself, which make him a competent judge. In short, to me the trip marks not so much the beginning of Montaigne's awareness of human unity as a heightening of it.

But even if this is so, it is a small criticism of a first-class book. Handling a difficult subject with mastery, Dr. Buffum has increased our understanding of Montaigne's evolution by building existing conjectures into strong probabilities and offering a number of plausible and important conjectures that had not been made before. He has done so with great judiciousness and at the same time with a grace and clarity of thought and style that make the book a pleasure to read. (Even the proof-reading is excellent.) A worthy pendant to Villey's monumental study of bookish influences, *Les Sources et l'évolution des Essais de Montaigne*, Dr. Buffum's study of the influence of the journey is in my opinion one of the most valuable contributions to Montaigne scholarship in recent years.

DONALD M. FRAME

Columbia University

*Dramatizations of French Short Stories in the Eighteenth Century, with Special Reference to the "Contes" of La Fontaine, Marmontel, and Voltaire.* By Clarence D. Brenner. (University of California Publications in Modern Philology) Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1947. Pp. 33.

The relatively inferior quality of the French eighteenth-century theater has, upon occasion, been ascribed to the fact that never before or since has the theater in France been so popular. Supporters of this thesis quite plausibly maintain that the public's insistence upon plays and more plays fostered an inevitable production of quantity rather than quality to satisfy this ever-increasing demand. Although Professor Brenner, in the Introduction to his study, blames the lack of originality in form and content of eighteenth-century French plays on authors who "are much more concerned with literary than with dramatic preoccupations," the overall impression left by the monograph is that playwrights and librettists were primarily interested in converting whatever was profitably exploitable into grist for the dramatic mills of the day. In fact Mr. Brenner himself tells us that, though the practice of exploiting fictional material for the stage has long been recognized as a legitimate procedure, it was indulged in to an uncommon degree in eighteenth-century France. This is the situation which the author of the present study has proposed to discuss. In doing so, he has offered information which is both pertinent and useful. He has, however, uncompromisingly limited himself, since *Dramatizations of French Short Stories* deals with the "contes" of three writers, La Fontaine, Marmontel and Voltaire, as sources for comedy only.<sup>1</sup> It must be admitted that the term "comedy" is used here somewhat loosely, for in the lists afforded us at the end of each chapter we find not only the designation *comédie*, but also such vocables as *comédie-bouffe*, *comédie héroïque*, *pastorale*, *pastorale-héroïque*, *pantomime*, *ballet pantomime*, *ballet héroïque*, *opéra*, *opéra-bouffe*, *parade*, and even *drame* and *tragédie*.

In Chapter II there is the both interesting and credible assertion that in eighteenth-century France La Fontaine enjoyed greater and more sustained popularity than any other seventeenth-century writer.<sup>2</sup> Of the sixty-four *contes* of La Fontaine, Mr. Brenner has been able to ascertain that forty different ones have been utilized in the French theater of the period with a total of ninety-one adaptations in all. This greatly surpasses the number of dramatizations of his fables. The point is scrupulously made, however, that this does not necessarily indicate the *contes* to have been more popular, but rather that they offered more material for dramatization than the fables and therefore required less original effort from the dramatist.

1. See p. 2, footnote 2.

2. The nature and scope of the monograph do not allow Mr. Brenner to develop the reasons for this popularity. He plans at some later date, however, to make a detailed study of the "fortune" of La Fontaine in eighteenth-century France.

We are also told that after 1760 La Fontaine's *contes* were increasingly used as source material for dramatic production. No doubt La Fontaine's quickened popularity with playwrights was considerably aided by the success of Marmontel's short stories which, soon after the first edition of 1761, were seized upon by Favart and others as, in the words of Bachaumont, "une mine féconde, dont on cherche à approprier les richesses." All twenty-two of Marmontel's tales were utilized for the stage and at least ninety-one plays (the same number as in the case of La Fontaine) were based directly or indirectly on them during the later half of the century. Most of these adaptations were operatic in form, thus reflecting the cumulative vogue of music in the theater during the twenty-five years prior to the Revolution.

Although most of Voltaire's better-known *contes philosophiques* had been published before 1760, dramatic versions of his stories appeared relatively late in the century. Mr. Brenner explains this by the fact that the outstanding *contes* were episodic and so did not provide simple, sustained plots suitable for adaptation. If the *Contes de Guillaume Vadé*, published in 1764, presented material more to the liking of dramatists, taken as a whole, Voltaire's tales offered comparatively little to attract the playwright. Nevertheless, in a period when plays, playwrights and playhouses were multiplying rapidly, as many as twenty-seven of his *contes* were drawn upon for dramatic pieces.

Mr. Brenner, who has identified the imposing number of 209 dramatizations of the three authors considered, states that the total number of dramatic adaptations of short stories during the eighteenth century may be estimated at around 275. In view of such an impressive figure, he considers it safe to assume that the *conte* was the most important single printed source of material for the playwrights of the period.

In concluding his monograph, the author apparently feels that the chief importance of his investigation lies in the fact that it adds substantially to the evidence that "as a whole, comedy in this century is characterized by a lack of originality and by a literary rather than an artistic portrayal of life." It strikes the present reviewer that such a conclusion misplaces the emphasis on the significance of an interesting and informative study. Since only about twenty-six of the 209 plays listed are definitely assigned to a date preceding 1752, is it prudent to infer that the evidence offered shows a trend in adaptations which dominates the century as a whole? Much more important, I think, is the contribution which has been here made to the history of two other aspects of the French eighteenth-century theater: 1) the almost insatiable appetite of the theater-going public for spectacles, especially in the second half of the century; 2) the increasingly closer bond between music and the theater in the only century, perhaps, which could have witnessed such a heated musical controversy as the "Querelle des Bouffons."

OTIS FELLOWS

Columbia University

*Diderot, l'homme et l'œuvre.* Par Daniel Mornet. Paris, Boivin et Cie, 1941. Pp. 208.

Professor Mornet who, for many years, has reviewed most of the important publications on Diderot and who has written the first study in French on the *Neveu de Rameau*, devotes now a comprehensive book to Diderot and his works. The special purpose for which the book was written, the series *Le Livre de l'étudiant*, founded and directed by Paul Hazard, has undoubtedly determined or at least influenced its structure and tenor. Professor Mornet does not study Diderot from any particular angle, but follows, with some essayistic modifications, the traditional pattern of the "life and thought analysis," reviewing the main fields of Diderot's activity. Part I deals with Diderot's temperament, Part II with Diderot the philosopher (subdivisions are: the intellectual atmosphere, speculative and experimental philosophy, philosophy of feeling, the *Encyclopédie*), Part III with Diderot the *conteur*, the dramatist, the letter writer, and the art critic. The work is meant as an introduction to Diderot, an orientation for those who would lose their way in the complexity, wealth, and variety of Diderot's ideas. In this respect the chronological notes and the summaries of Diderot's main writings, published as an appendix, will prove very helpful. Somewhat surprising, particularly in the case of a student's handbook, is the fact that no reference is given for passages quoted from the works of Diderot and other authors.

As could be expected, Professor Mornet's book is eminently readable, written with the perfect ease and assurance of a scholar who has lived for many years in the house of thought of French letters, whose ideas have grown and matured in the light of the great works, and who speaks of all of them with the facility, spontaneity, and familiar knowledge of the *habitué*. He is not perturbed by doubts, from which some of the younger scholars suffer, about the validity and pertinence of the traditional categories of literary history. Professor Mornet's categories are as well established as social conventions or the code of practical wisdom. There are, however, particularly in Diderot, many things that surpass these categories. First of all, Diderot is a contradictory and unpredictable author. Professor Mornet points this out from the very beginning; as a matter of fact he has been stressing it in various reviews of books that attempted to find unity in Diderot's thoughts. However, Professor Mornet concedes, even Diderot's thought must have some kind of unity, because otherwise he could not be understood at all. Where is this unity to be found?—In Diderot's temperament! Professor Mornet devotes to it the first part of his book and comes to the conclusion that it is just this temperament which is contradictory. Diderot follows his moods and humors, and the reader is forced to follow them too.

Since Professor Mornet's study bears more on Diderot's place in the eighteenth century than on Diderot himself, there remains the problem of

inserting an unpredictable, unusual author into the tradition of French letters and of applying to him the well-established categories. Professor Mornet solves it by showing that Diderot's ideas are much less revolutionary, new, and unusual than is often claimed; that he is at times close to French classicism, Cartesianism, or other currents of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Even his lack of composition and method, his irregularity can partly be traced to accepted models. What creates the impression of newness, is simply Diderot's peculiar way of saying things—it would have been interesting to analyze this way. And even if there is something new in Diderot, he had so little influence, his works were so unknown in his own time, that he cannot be considered a history-making author. In the eighteenth century the number of editions of his works is even inferior to that of the "*traités de matérialisme brutal et puéril d'un La Mettrie*" (page 195). As to the contradictions, the temperament presumably explains them.

I do not quite follow the method of evaluating an author's influence by the number of editions of his works. Professor Mornet has used it in his investigations of the number of copies to be found in private libraries. These investigations are very valuable and interesting, but it seems to me that if, for instance, an outstanding writer reads one of those books that had only a small circulation, and is stimulated by it, the book is at least as "influential" as that read by a number of anonymous readers. This instance applies precisely to Diderot whose works may not have been read by many of his contemporaries (though there is still the circulation of manuscripts to be considered), but certainly "influenced" a number of great writers. I must, however, add that I do not think that the value, significance, and importance of an author can be decided on the basis of his influence. The term influence itself is far from being clear.

As to the question of Diderot's contradictions—the constant topic of Diderot criticism for over a hundred years—I do not think that it can be solved by referring to Diderot's temperament; one simply reduces the contradiction of ideas to that of the character, *i.e.*, one shifts the problem. I would even question the underlying assumption of the argument against contradictory thinking. Those who accuse an author of having conflicting views, seem to take it for granted that life, the world, the nature of things, have a certain unity and follow a definite rational pattern. This assumption seems to me highly debatable: a postulate, an ideal, perhaps wishful thinking, are taken as evidence and made the basis for deduction. There certainly is an amount of plain inconsistency in Diderot, but there are also many contradictions which seem to me highly plausible and justifiable, and I have always admired Diderot for having been unwilling to sacrifice the incongruities of life to a unified, coherent picture of the world. His readiness to face the complexity and many-sidedness of things and human characters,



their irreconcilable diversity, gives to his thought a depth and breadth, a liveliness and variety which his contemporaries do not have.

Even less convincing is Professor Mornet's identification of contradiction with dualism (he identified them already in his study on the *Neveu de Rameau*). The two concepts cannot be identified, neither on principle, nor in Diderot's case. Diderot has not two opposing views on an issue, but a plurality of views, and to force them into a dualistic scheme falsifies the whole issue.

As to the dominant note of Professor Mornet's book that there is little in Diderot which is new, I wonder whether one could find a "new" idea in Voltaire or even Montaigne. Both, however, are very influential and original authors. Few ideas are new or original in themselves; what is new is the way in which they are related to each other, their pattern, the use an author makes of them, the interest he takes in them, the importance they have for him—"new" are all the imponderable factors such as weightiness, density, pointedness, or what the French critic Charles Du Bos called the tone and tempo. I fear that Professor Mornet, in his tendency to find in everything something which reminds him of another, does not always see what use Diderot made of "old" or "well-known" ideas, which significance they had for him and consequently have for those who like him.

It would seem that Professor Mornet's complete and thorough knowledge of French literature as a whole—a knowledge which makes his book very valuable not only for students, but also for scholars—focuses his attention on those features which an author has or seems to have in common with others, and leads to a certain detachment with regard to individual traits and peculiarities; it even seems to necessitate a moderation or restraint of the affection and sympathy for what is unique, irregular, difficult, obscure and unpredictable in an author.

Diderot wrote excellent pages on Chardin, Vernet, Terence, Richardson, because he loved their works; he abandoned himself to them with all his enthusiasm, depth, and clarity of feeling. One probably will understand Diderot only if one feels for him the same affection which he so liberally bestowed upon the authors he liked. Professor Mornet, who is always excellent when he discusses the points where Diderot coincides with the general history of ideas in the eighteenth century, seems too well versed in the ways of literature to become involved in such a peremptory feeling for Diderot.

HERBERT DIECKMANN

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*The Censoring of Diderot's Encyclopédie and the Re-established Text.* By Douglas H. Gordon and Norman L. Torrey. New York, Columbia University Press, 1947. Pp. 124.

A set of Diderot's *Encyclopédie*, bearing the bookplate of the Russian General Staff, was sold by the Soviets in Germany and found its way to



America. Ultimately it was purchased, in 1933, by Dr. Douglas H. Gordon, then President of St. John's College. The commanding interest of this set was not the magnificent red morocco binding, or the somewhat commonplace coat of arms stamped on its cover: it was an extra volume of sundry documents concerning the *Encyclopédie*, and, in that volume, over 300 pages of the original proof sheets, with the corrections made, of his own authority, by the publisher, Le Breton. It seems highly probable that the set was owned, and the material of the special volume collected, by Le Breton himself.

The publisher thus carefully preserved evidence of a "crime" which we knew he had committed, but which had never been accurately defined. At the request of Professor Horatio Smith, the documents were carefully examined by Professor Norman L. Torrey, whose Voltaire studies are among the leading contributions to Enlightenment scholarship. The present volume is the result of that investigation, in which two of Professor Torrey's students, Professor Joseph E. Barker and Miss Charlotte Morris, took active part.

The two introductory chapters give a compendious but extremely substantial account of "The Great Publishing Venture." The next two discuss "The Censor's Black Ink" and "The Nature of the Censored Material." Forty pages are devoted to the re-established text. An inventory of the material, a bibliography and an index complete this most thorough monograph.

But a monograph need not be "dry-as-dust." Diderot is so vital that the very name seems to have warm blood and strong sinews. On the occasion of Le Breton's betrayal, we know that Diderot broke forth into a tropical storm of vituperation. We understand his indignation, and we cannot condone for a moment the shabby, surreptitious manner in which his text was emasculated. Still, this tribute being paid to the author's feelings, and to the decencies of the book trade, the actual text brings with it its own extenuating circumstances.

The *Encyclopédie* was a paradoxical enterprise—a Trojan horse favored by the complicity of the besieged. The Monarchy by Divine Right allowed its agents to temper, and indeed to defeat, its repressive measures against the *philosophes*. Indeed, when Louis XV was the Lord's Anointed, it was difficult for serious men to repress a smile. The situation was absurd; but the absurdity had to be kept within reason. Even a Malesherbes could not have condoned too open a frontal attack on the Eternal Verities of Church and State.

This Le Breton understood perhaps a little better than Diderot. He made the task of the authorities a little easier by anticipating their inevitable censorship. Incidentally, he saved himself a neat sum, and his subscribers unconscionable delays. We take it that he did not consult Diderot, because the fiery editor was at the same time indispensable and intractable. Le

Breton sneaked round the difficulty, and thus put himself hopelessly in the wrong.

But Diderot's vehement protest, when he discovered the fraud, revealed his tendency to overstatement. The painful work was not done with barbaric clumsiness, as he charged; and it did not appreciably reduce the efficacy of the *Encyclopédie* as a war machine. The strength of that great undertaking was in its whole free and scientific spirit, not in direct attacks and pyrotechnics. I take it that the editor of a scholarly publication today would recommend, and perhaps require, the very same excisions that Le Breton made in his underhanded way. Repeatedly, Diderot used a mere grammatical example as a barbed epigram: Le Breton quietly removed the sting. The unkindest cuts of all were in the articles "Philosophie pyrrhonienne ou sceptique," with a courageous defense of Bayle, "Théologie scholastique," "Théologie positive," "Tolérance." Diderot could have saved his shafts for pamphlets and letters. Certainly no one would challenge Professor Torrey's conclusion: "In spite of the publisher's unwarranted excisions, there was enough of the subversive left in the *Encyclopédie* to justify its reputation as the chief intellectual weapon in the destruction of the Old Régime."

ALBERT GUÉRARD

Stanford University

*The 'Courtisane' in the French Theatre from Hugo to Becque (1831-1885).*

By Sidney D. Braun. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins Press, 1947. Pp. 157.

The recent Théâtre Antoine production of *La Putain respectueuse* (Nagel, 1946), in which the Lady with the Camellias wields a vacuum cleaner, lends existential interest to a doctoral dissertation presented at New York University on the literary evolution of the courtesan. Mr. Braun, whose terminology is less Shakespearean than Jean Paul Sartre's, professes to study "the development and rôle of the *courtisane* in nineteenth century French dramatic literature with a view towards observing the sociological significances and dramatic implications in this literature in order to determine the attitude of the Age" (page 7). He has read 106 plays of the period from *Marion Delorme* to *La Parisienne*, the intervening authors being Dumas fils, Augier, Sardou, Barrière, and many forgotten names. We range from *Hernani* (listed for reasons which are not clear) to *Toto chez Tata*. The courtesan as a literary type appears, we are told, in France no earlier than the seventeenth century, but not until the Romantic period does her presence become conspicuous on the stage. In the theater of the thirties and forties she is the *grisette* and *lorette* of *La Vie de Bohème*, both attractive figures; in Hugo's dramas, a symbol of regeneration. The Second Empire, when women were considered a luxury, like race-horses, was the heyday of the venal *cocotte*, *demi-mondaine*, and *fille de marbre*.

Mr. Braun's chapter on the *demi-mondaine* contributes to semantics a

documented account of the usage of the term from 1855 to 1870. But his text is often carelessly edited: he writes "toi qui est" (page 46); "je n'irai pas par quatre chemins" (page 83); "la Restauration" (page 145); "our *raison d'être* for including this type" (page 15); etc. And for a study of (a) the mores and ethics of French society during the period, and (b) the evolution of literature from Romanticism to Realism, the nucleus chosen is perhaps a little arbitrarily defined. Several eighteenth-century *dramas* on the courtesan are worth noticing in the interests of continuity: see Gaiffe, *Le Drame en France au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*. The literature of the Romantic period, contrary to Mr. Braun's findings, abounds in examples of the *courtisane vertueuse*, particularly the novels of George Sand and of Balzac (whose *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes* may be presumed to have some significance in the context of Augier and Dumas *filis*). We miss above all some indication of the importance of the theme in Baudelaire; works such as Mario Praz, *The Romantic Agony* (Oxford Press, 1933), A. Séché-J. Bertaut, *La Passion romantique* (Fasquelle, 1927), and L. Maigron, *Le Romantisme et les mœurs* (Champion, 1910) supply background to the transcendental realism of the *Fleurs du mal*. Roger Picard's recently published *Le Romantisme social* (Brentano's, 1944) is an indispensable guide to the study of the relation of literature to social ideas: it is not merely a coincidence that Hugo's rehabilitation of the courtesan is contemporaneous with the early socialists' quest of the Woman Messiah. Dumas *filis*' picture of the *cocotte* as the evil influence undermining the morale of French society exemplifies a "realism" which Mr. Braun rightly refuses to accept uncritically. It is the familiar chromo dusted off in 1940 by certain illustrious French exiles wishing to pander to the "bien pensants" on this side of the Atlantic. Such memories fresh in our minds arouse sympathy for the existentialist protest against the vogue of a meretricious determinism as a mask for the shirking of personal responsibility.

D. O. EVANS

*The University of British Columbia*

*Lueurs sur Mallarmé*. Par Charles Chassé. Paris, Collection Plein Midi, Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1947. Pp. 128.

Le Directeur des Editions de la Nouvelle Revue Critique a eu une excellente idée le jour où il décida de réunir en volume les articles que Charles Chassé a publiés sur Mallarmé. Car cette plaquette contient plus de matière dans ses 128 pages que beaucoup de gros in-octavo plus prétentieux. Elle rassemble le fruit de trente-cinq années de lecture et de méditation sur un sujet difficile et les résultats d'intelligentes enquêtes. Chassé a interrogé d'anciens collègues, des élèves, des amis de Mallarmé, et il a ainsi sauvé de l'oubli bien des faits qui aident à tracer le portrait de l'auteur de l'"Après-midi d'un faune."

Pour ces recherches Chassé était vraiment un prédestiné. Comme Mallarmé il a été professeur d'anglais et il a occupé la chaire de Mallarmé à Avignon; il s'est donc pénétré de l'atmosphère où a respiré son auteur, duquel il a pu imaginer les sensations rien qu'en interrogeant ses propres souvenirs. Ce sont là des circonstances idéales pour un biographe.

Il y paraît dans le chapitre "Mallarmé universitaire." Le professeur sans enthousiasme, déchiré par les difficultés d'une existence besogneuse, objet à la fois de ridicule, d'admiration et d'étonnement pour ses élèves, découvrant peu à peu, au contact du félibrige, sa mission littéraire, rêvant d'une œuvre suprapoétique, revit dans ces pages avec une extraordinaire intensité. Il est rare de trouver dans un simple article une présence aussi réelle de l'homme portraituré.

L'homme se montre encore dans le chapitre intitulé "Mallarmé dans le Finistère" et surtout dans les "Lettres à Mistral" que Chassé a eu la bonne fortune de tenir de Mistral lui-même. La délicate et tendre nature de Mallarmé, son exquise urbanité percent à chaque phrase et l'on comprend le pouvoir que ce chef d'école exerça sur tous ceux qui l'approchèrent. Ici, point d'obscurité, seulement le style spontané d'un homme qui pense poétiquement jusqu'aux choses les plus banales; les images se pressent sous la plume, gracieuses ou surprenantes, et l'on se dit que si Mallarmé s'était contenté d'employer la forme poétique normale à son époque, il eût été reconnu pour le plus grand poète de sa génération.

Le chapitre le plus intéressant, toutefois, le plus original aussi, est celui qui est intitulé "Explication de Mallarmé." Il développe une thèse dont la vérité n'est pas discutable. Charles Chassé a été élevé dans les principes de la méthode historique, telle qu'elle a été formulée par Lanson: avant d'admirer il cherche à comprendre. De plus, par tempérament, il abomine les enthousiasmes irréfléchis, trop fréquents dans les milieux littéraires, qui font du premier venu un génie méconnu, parce qu'un critique en mal d'originalité l'a voulu ainsi. Il a dégonflé pas mal de fausses réputations comme celle du douanier Rousseau, ou celle de Jarry, en montrant qu'*Ubu-Roi* avait pour source une peu littéraire charge de potaches ridiculisant l'un de leurs professeurs. Il existe des mallarméens qui se vantent d'aimer Mallarmé pour la seule raison qu'ils ne comprennent rien à sa poésie et qu'ainsi il leur est permis de lui prêter n'importe quel sens, au gré de leur fantaisie. Chassé, en admirateur sincère, pense que Mallarmé a toujours eu des idées claires même quand leur expression paraît irrémédiablement obscure. Il s'agit de retrouver ces idées claires et on le peut, si seulement on met quelque méthode à cette recherche. Tout d'abord, Mallarmé a un vocabulaire et une syntaxe à lui. Il rajeunit les mots en les employant dans leur sens strictement étymologique, en leur restituant quelquefois leur sens latin: par exemple "l'âme résumée" ne veut pas dire "une âme en abrégé," mais "reprise" (re-sumere), "élire" c'est "choisir" (eligere), etc. Et il ne faut pas oublier que Mallarmé était professeur d'anglais et que son style

abonde en anglicismes: au lieu de "plus d'un" il dit "plus qu'un" (*more than*) et "ignorer" a pour lui le sens de "to ignore" "ne pas tenir compte de, négliger." De même sa syntaxe échappe aux lois ordinaires: il affectionne les ablatifs absolus latins, il met un adjectif avant le substantif, à la manière anglaise, là où nous le mettrions après; il place le sujet après le verbe et le complément avant, de sorte qu'il est parfois difficile de dire lequel est le sujet et lequel est le complément. Il faut donc, premièrement établir une grammaire de Mallarmé, et cela est facile.

Il est plus difficile de retrouver l'idée claire dont les vers donnent une expression obscurcie. Mallarmé n'est pas obscur par pur caprice. Il s'est fait de la poésie une idée si haute qu'il a voulu la mettre au-dessus de la compréhension du vulgaire et aussi éloignée que possible du réel prosaïque. C'est pourquoi il s'interdit de nommer les objets et s'applique à rendre seulement l'impression sublimée que ces objets ont laissée en lui. Et comme les images se succèdent dans son esprit avec rapidité, comme des coureurs luttant pour se dépasser, il utilise ce don pour arriver du premier coup à l'image inattendue, saisissante, compréhensive en laquelle se sont finalement fondues plusieurs autres. C'est le point de départ de cette image complexe qu'il faut dégager et pour cela il y a un moyen. Il est rare que Mallarmé n'ait pas repris une idée dans d'autres écrits que ses poèmes, dans sa correspondance, dans des passages en prose, dans des œuvres inachevées, où, ne se croyant pas tenu d'être obscur, il s'exprimait ouvertement. Que l'on rapproche l'un de ces passages en clair d'un passage obscur et l'effet produit est celui d'une lampe soudain allumée, venant éclairer la page que l'on s'obstinait à lire dans un jour déclinant. Il y a, par exemple, dans le "Tombeau de Baudelaire," un vers sur le gaz "dont le vol selon le réverbère découche" qui, si je ne me trompe, n'a jamais été parfaitement expliqué. Chassé nous rappelle que Mallarmé a écrit ailleurs, en prose, "le gaz qui apporte au séjour d'intimité des réminiscences de lieu public;" cette phrase nous fournit les éléments de la pensée qui a disparu dans l'effort de condensation du poète: le bec de gaz (autrefois appelé papillon, d'où l'idée de vol) choquait Mallarmé parce que dans la demi-obscurité d'une chambre, propice à l'intimité, il introduisait le souvenir d'un réverbère éclairant la rue où se pressent les débauchés courant à leurs plaisirs publics.<sup>1</sup>

Le moment est venu, pense Chassé, de prouver l'intelligibilité de Mallarmé à l'aide de pareils rapprochements. Il faudra pour cette exégèse des travailleurs méthodiques qui dresseront "une sorte de traduction juxtaposée qui aurait pour point de départ la signification précise que le poète

1. Le souvenir du réverbère a probablement été amené (c'était de circonstance) par le début du "Vin des chiffonniers" de Baudelaire:

Souvent, à la clarté rouge d'un réverbère  
Dont le vent bat la flamme et tourmente le verre,  
Au cœur d'un vieux faubourg, labyrinthe fangeux  
Où l'humanité grouille en ferments orageux . . .

octroie à certains mots." Mieux compris Mallarmé s'imposera dans la somptueuse richesse et la souple agilité de son imagination.

Il est impossible de relever dans un compte rendu toutes les idées neuves qui foisonnent dans cette plaquette, celles, entre autres, sur le tempérament septentrional de Mallarmé et sur la commune origine de l'horreur mallarméenne du mot propre et le goût de Delille pour la périphrase. Chaque paragraphe est à méditer. Et ce n'est pas d'une lecture ennuyeuse, car Chassé n'est pas seulement un historien littéraire accompli, c'est aussi un homme d'esprit, et à son commerce avec les auteurs anglais il a acquis un sens de l'humour qui lui a appris à rire sans colère des absurdités de la critique mal informée.

ALBERT FEUILLERAT

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*André Malraux.* Par Gaëtan Picon. Paris, Gallimard, 1945. Pp. 126.

Gaëtan Picon is one of the generation of critics who have appeared in France since the war. For him and his contemporaries Malraux is almost an obligatory subject, just as Gide was obligatory for beginning critics in the late 'twenties and early 'thirties—the standard by which they give their own measure. He is young enough for Malraux to be a sort of personal hero to him, and his book—the best treatment of Malraux I have seen<sup>1</sup>—bears many of the marks of youth: it is the duty of the critic, he says, to judge, and he judges not only categorically but with vigor also. Malraux is, in M. Picon's eyes, the greatest writer of a generation. To be sure, the generation is the one that follows Gide, Valéry and Proust; Giono, Montherlant, Green, Bernanos, and Malraux himself do not measure up, either in amplitude of talent or in variety of expression, to their immediate predecessors; M. Picon himself is careful to make this distinction in his Introduction, and then proceeds to write three chapters in which he is, if not unaware of, at least not very interested in, Malraux's weaknesses.

The three chapters treat Malraux as Revolutionary, as Tragic Poet and as Stylist. M. Picon believes that the works from *Les Conquérants* to *L'Espoir*, inclusive, comprise a completed period in Malraux's development. After *L'Espoir*—that is, in *Les Noyers de l'Altenbourg*—Malraux enters a new and different mood. His three chapters bear largely, as they indeed must, on the works of the completed period.

The admirable chapter on Malraux as revolutionary of course makes much capital of *Les Conquérants*, with particular emphasis on the figure of Garine, and even more of *La Condition humaine*. M. Picon sees Malraux as one of the few real metaphysical writers in French literature (Pascal was another) and connects the metaphysical bent with the bent for tragedy, and in turn sees the need for action as one of the elements in man's meta-

1. I have been unable to see Claude Mauriac's recent study of Malraux.



physical plight when viewed under the species of tragedy. Now, Revolution, he says, is *l'Acte par excellence*. M. Picon's eye is on the basic dispositions which underlie Malraux's revolutionary activities. "Le vrai sujet de Malraux, ce n'est pas la Révolution, c'est la 'Lutte avec l'ange', une vision de l'aventure humaine qui voit sa grandeur dans son aptitude 'à mettre le monde en question.' " It may seem downright strange to read a chapter called "le Révolutionnaire" which makes so little reference to the Communist Party. Those who remember Malraux's visit to the United States and his activities in China and Spain may find it difficult to take in one gulp. But especially in America, where Malraux has always been presented to the public by critics writing in periodicals which are oriented to the taste of audiences whose political awareness exceeds their literary sophistication, this chapter is highly recommended reading. We have been prone to view Malraux essentially as a political fabulist, as a preacher receiving his sermon texts by direct wire from Moscow. Consequently we have been puzzled, especially in recent months, by the variations in his political activities.

Now, no one denies that Malraux has served his time as an out-and-out propagandist; M. Picon least of all. But a moment's comparison of Malraux with his hero T. E. Lawrence shows how right M. Picon is in subordinating Malraux's communism to Malraux's metaphysical—and why not add esthetic?—need for action. Lawrence is the man of action who also wrote a great book, but the *Seven Pillars* leaves the reader convinced of how much more important to Lawrence the action in Arabia was than the book that came out of it. With Malraux one always feels that the action is a necessary preface to the book. This is not saying that Malraux is inferior to Lawrence; it is saying that Malraux is no more the man of action than he is the unquiet conscience, the intellectual divided between the wish to return to the womb and the need to be the Universal Spectator (Cyril Connolly says that what such people want is "a Womb with a View"); it is saying that he is, in short, the modern man of letters. M. Picon's superiority lies in his ability to see Malraux in this light.

For this is the light which best illumines Malraux as Tragic Poet. "La Révolution, elle est avant tout une lutte de l'homme contre l'humiliation qui l'accable." The opposite of humiliation, as Kyo says in *La Condition humaine*, is human dignity. And it is man's fate, as Hemingway has finally discovered in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and as Steinbeck once discovered and then forgot, that he must affirm his dignity through tragic action. The chapter on Malraux and tragedy is called "La Condition humaine."

We have just lived through, as M. Picon insists, a time when at least in Europe man's dignity has been seriously challenged, in which violence, injustice, abject inhumanity, and early and at times not unwelcome death, have been the rule. Much of our literature has tended toward the tragic. Professor Levin was quite correct in writing in his book on Joyce that



Hemingway and Malraux were wandering about the world trying to impart to the modern intellectual the stature of a tragic hero; Malraux himself has characterized Faulkner's work as a mixture of detective-story and tragedy; Céline's work, and Thomas Wolfe's, constitute an affirmation of at least half of the tragic situation, the indignity of humanity's frustration—so that they can be interpreted as elaborations on the theme of "The Wasteland." M. Picon sees Malraux's greatness in the fact that he has pushed furthest in the quest for man's compensating dignity. He even insists that in the sense that tragedy implies the hollow victory of man's triumph at the cost of his own destruction, Malraux has not stopped at the confines of tragedy but gone beyond it through the discovery that it is possible not only to break through man's horrible feeling of solitude into the comfort of virile fraternity but also to break the bonds of the tragic predicament itself.

I could wish that these chapters had been further elaborated at the expense of the chapter on style. Malraux, as Picon sees him, is not a finished stylist, and the actual writing in his books is perhaps their least satisfactory aspect. The effort to trace the development of Malraux's characteristic phrase from the *Tentation de l'Occident* down to the *Noyers* is conscientious and extremely patient, but hardly rewarding. Fortunately the chapter is full of interesting incidental judgments. I quote one:

Artiste autant que Proust, homme autant que Steinbeck ou Hemingway,—neuf sans être naïf, direct sans être élémentaire—, Malraux fait pénétrer la vie dans la littérature (ainsi que les meilleurs américains) mais il ne consent pas à exclure la conscience de la vie. (Page 107.)

But the main argument of the chapter reveals too little about Malraux. With M. Picon's belief that the progress in Malraux's writing has been rectilinear there may be no quarrel, but the fact seems unimportant: his conclusion is reached by the kind of elementary stylistic analysis which is the glory of the French educational system but not exactly what it takes to measure a writer of Malraux's proportions.

I wonder whether a broader conception of the nature of craftsmanship would not have helped the critic at this point. Perhaps if he had gone back of the problems of composition and style to the more general problem of form itself the result would have been richer in insights. From the shoddy romanticism of *La Voie royale*, with its multifold reminiscences of *Du Sang, de la volupté et de la mort*, of Loti, Conrad, Nietzsche and Gide, to the rich fullness of *La Condition humaine* and *Le Temps du mépris*, there is inescapable evidence that while he was gradually discovering the tragic potentialities of the modern human figure, Malraux also discovered hitherto barely suspected possibilities in the novel form as a vehicle for tragedy. By the time he writes *La Condition humaine*, critics go for comparison less to other novels than to the Greek theater, and in 1935 he reaches something quite close to the full exploitation of the novel as a tragic form, *Le Temps du mépris*. M. Picon considers this book merely uncharacteristic, but more

consideration of the formal aspect of Malraux's work might have suggested a contrary judgment. As far as form is concerned it completes Malraux's progress toward prose-fiction tragedy: there is one figure alone in the center of the stage; the settings (a cell, the cockpit of a plane, the meeting hall and the apartment in Prague) are only backdrops; there is one theme, one struggle and, through his use of the device of recapitulating past experience as present phantasy, the tension and struggle rise entirely out of the mind of the hero. While it is quite true that Malraux shifts from a tragic to an epic mood, as M. Picon asserts, an examination of the form suggests that the shift begins earlier than *L'Espoir*, where M. Picon first describes it. Down to *Le Temps du mépris*, three full years before *L'Espoir*, Malraux's novels are over-populated; the structure is strained to hold the amount that happens to the people; the characters have hardly time to eat and sleep because of the compulsive force of their tragic *Angst* and the reader has at times to make a conscious effort of credulity. *L'Espoir* is so much more leisurely and spacious, so much less intense—in a word, it sprawls—and the characters are so much less aware of their tragic significance, that the tragic element seems already subordinated in the form even though it may still be present in the emotional mood of the author. If the study of the form had sufficed to make M. Picon reconsider his—on the whole—unfavorable judgment of *Le Temps du mépris*, and if subsequently he had gone on to relate what he reveals about composition and style to the formal problem, he would have given us, if I am right, an even stronger book.

It is already a strong book, and one suspects that even in a time when the literary production of France seems to be hyperintellectualized and predominantly critical its author will emerge as one of the truly authoritative voices. His equipment is extensive;<sup>2</sup> his literary tact and sensitivity admirable. This book is essential reading.

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*Linguistica*. By Bruno Migliorini. Firenze, Le Monnier, 1946. Pp. 110.

"Linguistics" is a large subject to pack into 110 undersized pages, but Migliorini's work is avowedly one of vulgarization, meant for the more cultured masses rather than the technician of language. Within his brief allotted space, Migliorini handles linguistic terminology, phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicology, "Language and Society," "Language in Space," "Language in Time," changes in sounds, forms, constructions and vocabulary, and the linguistic families.

Migliorini's style is flowing and eminently readable. Of the attempts that have been made to bring the elementary facts of linguistics within the ken of the layman, his is one of the best. His greatest virtue lies perhaps

2. Including a thorough familiarity with the recent Americans, among whom he inadvertently lists Joyce. This slip is probably eloquent as a sign of the times.

in the skill with which he has chosen what to leave unsaid. This is a book of high-lights, not of details.

Migliorini is an acute observer and an equally keen reasoner. Very few of his statements are questionable. Yet he is no traditionalist. Phonemes, morphemes and similar innovations are presented and described with reasonable accuracy and complete absence of fanaticism. A sample of the reasonableness of Migliorini's approach appears in connection with his two-page discussion of the phoneme (pages 10-11): "In some languages the phonemes can be approximately identified with the pronunciation of a certain locality or class. For other tongues there is still discussion, and the margin of oscillation is wider."

In his presentation of the morpheme (page 27) the author brings out with enviable clearness the difference between the logical and the grammatical categories. He rightly rejects as valid for all languages the old grammatical categories of Greek and Latin, but hastens to add that they have abundant pedagogical and linguistic value insofar as they compel us to compare different linguistic systems.

To those of us who have been shocked by recent attacks upon the value of the written language as contrasted with the spoken form, the following statement (page 42) will bring a sense of relief: "Writing is a factor of capital importance in the fixation of the linguistic norm. The bond between writer and reader is far less subject to the vicissitudes of the moment than the bond between speaker and hearer. One can read the writings of men who are very distant in time and space."

Mechanists will derive little comfort from the statement (page 63): "It is absurd to conceive the division of dialects and subdialects in a fashion similar to that of species and subspecies in the natural sciences"; or from the one (page 74): "In formulating this regularity, the linguists of 1870-1880 made the mistake of extending the term 'law' to linguistics." On page 80 we read: "The chief motive of phonetic changes cannot be sought outside of the speaker's psychology . . . it is not scientifically legitimate to consider on altogether different planes regular phonetic changes and those that have their root in analogy," while on page 90 we find: "It is idle to discuss whether phonetics or semantics should have priority in vocabulary research; an acceptable etymology must equally satisfy the requirements of both." The most felicitous statement of this type appears on page 77, in connection with Tuscan examples of the sonorization of intervocalic plosives: "Lastly, we must not exclude the possibility that at some periods, in some localities, two socially differentiated traditions may have coexisted, one more conservative, the other more open to innovations; and that at the moment of fixation of the literary tongue a compromise between two competing forms may have been stabilized in the written tradition."<sup>1</sup>

1. See my *The Italian Language*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1941, pp. 30-31.

Points of divergence will necessarily arise between any author and any reviewer. Among questions of fact to which we take exception is the statement (page 6) that "in English-speaking countries, what we call linguistics is generally known as philology, or comparative philology"; this may have been true twenty years ago, but it hardly holds today. On page 35, the author asks us to compare "the strictness of the rules for sequence of tenses in Latin with the freedom of Italian"; it seems to us that sequence of tenses is one of the few fields in which the old Latin rules are still generally valid in Italian.

One point of phonetics on which we emphatically agree with Migliorini, but about which certain phoneticians will argue, is the one (page 18) to the effect that the Italian sounds of  $\tilde{c}$ ,  $\tilde{g}$  are not to be taken as two distinct and successive articulations ( $t\tilde{c}$ ,  $d\tilde{g}$ ), but as single consonant sounds.

As matters of interpretation, we differ with Migliorini's concept of literary Italian as fundamentally Tuscan (page 44). Curiously, he supplies a weapon against this Tuscan interpretation of Italian (page 68) when he reminds us that in northern and southern Italy today *zio* struggles with *barba*, *ziano*, *barbano*, and adds that the same conflict must once have taken place in Tuscany to judge from forms like *barba*, *barbano*, *ziano* in Dante, Pucci and other older writers. This repetition of a historical conflict seems to us to bear witness to the fundamental unity of the Italian *koiné* and the fact that it does not stem from any region in particular.

"Linguistic geography," says Migliorini (page 66), "endeavors to establish by conjecture or induction, from the geographical distribution, the historical stratification of the various forms." We know what use has been made of this so-called inductive process based on linguistic geography,<sup>2</sup> and are tempted to use much salt upon conclusions arrived at in this fashion unless they are supported by documentary historical evidence.

Lastly, Migliorini adheres (page 83) to the somewhat threadbare theory of the derivation of the Italian singular of nouns and adjectives from the Latin accusative, and of the plural from the nominative. It is to be hoped that a perusal of the evidence appearing in the reviewer's *The Italian Language*, which reached Migliorini only after *Linguistica* had appeared, may lead him to revise his ideas.<sup>3</sup> If not, there is in preparation a new mass of documentary evidence based on the Longobardic texts of the seventh and eighth centuries which we hope will definitely set at rest this ancient and much controverted question.

These, in addition to being matters of personal opinion and interpretation, are very minor points in a work which is generally well-balanced, reasonable and skilfully wrought. An English edition of Migliorini's *Lin-*

2. See *Language*, 17.3.263 ff; 18.2.117 ff; 19.2.125 ff.

3. See also L. Sas, "The Noun Declension System in Merovingian Latin," Paris, 1937; Pei, "Accusative or Oblique?" *RR*, XXVIII, 241-267; Pei, "Latin and Italian Front Vowels," *M L N*, LVIII, 116-120.

*guistica*, with a few modifications destined to bring it more in line with the needs and viewpoints of the Anglo-Saxon countries, would be of great help in acquainting the layman and the beginning student with the elementary facts of linguistics.

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